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'The rot has got to stop'

ITV rebuked over diet of soap operas

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

INDEPENDENT television companies were reprimanded yesterday for flooding their schedules with soaps and drama serials, and told: "The rot has got to stop."

Peter Rogers, chief executive of the Independent Television Commission, deplored the lack of diversity on ITV and the unremitting diet of long-running serials, such as *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale* and *The Bill*, that were "increasingly dominating the evening schedules".

He conceded that most of ITV's drama output was of high quality, but it was "crowding out" other forms of entertainment — particularly light entertainment and comedy — and depriving viewers of more intellectually challenging fare.

The network should concentrate more on arts, documentary and children's drama, he said. The companies had fallen behind their licence obligations in all three areas and if the position were not rectified there would be trouble.

The commission, which is responsible for licensing and regulating commercial television, has the power to fine broadcasters millions of pounds and to revoke their franchises if they breach their codes of practice or the terms of their licences.

But the television companies immediately hit back, saying that the 35 million viewers who regularly tuned into their soaps and dramas could not be wrong. "We are splitting ticks," one senior ITV source said. Leslie Hill, chair-



"Hey, it would make a brilliant idea for a soap"

man of the ITV Network Centre, said: "Our viewers have come to expect a rich diet of well-written, well-told and well-made stories from us and we wish to continue to serve them in this way."

Nick Elliott, controller of network drama, was "gobsmacked" that the commission could praise the high quality of ITV drama with one breath and ask for less of it with the next. "The ITC seems to live in a past age. They sit in their Monday meetings and say, 'I think we should be a little less successful in this area'."

But in his annual review, Mr Rogers said that viewers did not necessarily want so much soap or drama — or the extra editions of *Coronation Street* and *Emmerdale* that had been introduced in response to competition. "Soaps, or serials, do require a very strong commitment from

viewers in order to avoid the spell being broken. I do have some unease about the additional hours that are being devoted to serials," he said.

The commission's report went on to note that the most successful ITV programmes in 1996 were *A Touch of Frost*, which drew audiences of 17 million or more, and *Heartbeat* and *London's Burning*, which dominated Sunday peaktime with audiences of up to 16 million each. "It is hardly surprising that, once again, ITV found it difficult to refresh the schedule with series with the potential to match such enduring appeal," the report said. But Mr Rogers pointed out that despite sticking with such tried and tested programmes, ITV had continued to lose audience share last year, while both BBC channels and Channel 4 held or improved their positions.

Time devoted to documentaries had fallen by a third to 40 minutes a week between 1995 and 1996 and ITV had signally failed to protect its flagship programme, *Network First*, which appeared only 18 times last year compared with 36 the year before. Arts programmes, too, had declined — from 33 to 31 minutes, and children's drama was down from 76 to 70 minutes. "The amount of programmes in these categories must, in 1998, be restored to at least the levels achieved in 1995," Mr Rogers said. "If the goods are not delivered within the time-scales there will have to be an outstandingly good explanation."

Continued on page 2, col 2



Emmerdale, Coronation Street and The Bill attract huge audiences, but do people really want more of them? asks the independent television watchdog

Russia and China forge new links

President Jiang Zemin of China began a visit to Russia to end decades of tension between the two neighbours and lay the foundations for a partnership to challenge America's global supremacy. Sino-Russian trade now amounts to some £5 billion a year, and Moscow has re-established itself as China's main arms supplier... Page 15

Labour dashes Argentine hopes on the Falklands

BY MICHAEL EVANS AND MICHAEL BINION

LABOUR was last night forced into an outright denial of a claim by Jorge Dominguez, the Argentine Defence Minister, that it will hand over the Falkland Islands if it wins the election.

He told *Jane's Defence Weekly*, published today, that he had meetings with several Labour politicians, including Tony Blair, the party leader. He is quoted as saying: "I believe that, after May 1, a new phase of review of the Malvinas [Falklands] with a new administration will start."

Señor Dominguez also claimed that Guido Di Tella, the Argentine Foreign Minister, had had meetings with

Labour politicians, also including Tony Blair. The implication of his remarks provoked strong denials from Labour. "There is not a shred of truth in the suggestion that there might be any change of policy towards the Falklands were Labour to be elected," the party said in a statement last night.

It added that if the Argentines were expecting any change in the British approach to the sovereignty of the islands, they were both mistaken "and ignoring the clear message given to both the islanders and the Argentine Government over recent years". The party also denied that

Ferries forced back in Calais blockade

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

FRENCH fishermen yesterday blockaded the port of Calais, forcing ferries to turn back and wrecking the travel plans of hundreds of holidaymakers and lorry drivers.

The fishermen strung their boats across the harbour entrance, apparently in protest at being ordered to use wider-mesh fishing nets.

More than 600 passengers

on two P&O ferries arrived back in Dover last night after the ships were forced to turn round in mid-Channel. But a third ferry, the *Pride of Dover*, broke through the blockade. The ferry arrived back in Dover last night, where police had set up roadblocks to advise lorry and car drivers not to attempt the crossing until the unexpected French action had ended. Passengers were being offered alternative crossings to the Belgian port of Zeebrugge or through the Channel Tunnel.

The fishermen's action was expected to last for 24 hours, but could be followed by further protests later.

About 2,000 lorries travel daily between Dover and Calais and the blockade was condemned by the Freight Transport Association.

Members are due to hand a giant invoice for £100 million (£100 million) to the French Embassy today for money owed to British and other drivers as a result of the French lorry drivers' blockade of Calais in November.

Tiny pump to revolutionise heart surgery

BY IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A BRITISH surgeon who has perfected a tiny titanium pump to give diseased hearts a six-month "holiday" hopes to carry out the first human trial this year.

The battery-powered device, no bigger than a thumb, can be fitted inside a heart in a simple operation and take over the work of pumping blood round the body. Powered by a unique relay of wires threaded under the skin

of the neck and fixed to the back of the skull to reduce infection, the device is far in advance of older — and bigger — artificial pumps.

Stephen Westaby, who runs the heart centre at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, says if clinical trials go well the pump will be mass produced and used to help the tens of thousands of people suffering from heart disease.

The results of trials so far are dramatically positive and we are terribly excited by it all," Mr Westaby said last

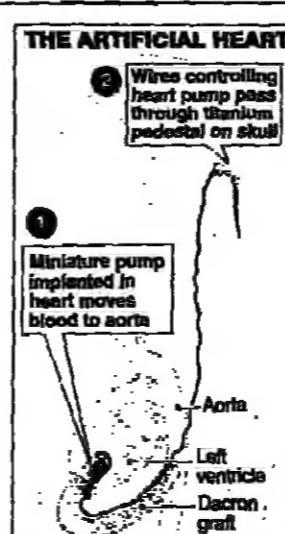
night. "Bench trials have shown that the pump not only works perfectly but that the diseased heart will usually recover when it does not have to work for a while. The pump gives the heart a holiday and after about six months it is usually ready to function normally again."

The Radcliffe team have been working on the pump with Robert Jarvik, an American pioneer of artificial hearts. His first, grapefruit-sized, design has been tried on five patients in Britain, two of

them fitted by Mr Westaby. It helped them all to live longer but there were so many inconveniences with the design that the Radcliffe team stopped using them two years ago and collaborated with the American team in developing a much smaller device. Called the Jarvik 2000, this can pump up to ten litres of blood a minute and will last indefinitely if the diseased organ fails to recover.

"Although the American team have been involved in

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Pupil wins right to challenge school in court over injury

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

A TEN-YEAR-OLD boy whose arm was broken when a fellow pupil gave him a "Chinese burn" won permission yesterday to take his school to the High Court over its failure to take action after the incident.

The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was "utterly shattered" by the alleged assault in a lunch queue, his father said. But the head teacher and school governors had decided not to discipline the assailant because they considered the injury an accident.

Since returning to his primary school in Basingstoke, Hampshire, in January, the boy, known only as W, had been isolated from fellow pupils outside class. Although the school said this was for his own protection while the injury healed, the effect was to deny him the company of friends and prevent him joining in other activities.

Philip Engelmann, representing the family in court, said the school had "closed its mind to this serious matter and the bullying that under-

lies it." Mr Justice Forbes gave the father leave to seek a judicial review of the school's action on his son's behalf.

The father, who had complained in the past about bullying and the lack of any policy to counter it, said after the hearing: "I have been accused of campaigning against the school, but I am only seeking justice for my son. I also want to protect the future safety of all children at the school."

Mr Engelmann said W suffered a spinal fracture to his arm, which indicated that considerable force was used in the assault. His assailant had admitted: "I went and gave him a Chinese burn and he moved, then I heard it click."

W had been bullied previously in the lunchtime queue by the same boy to such an extent that he had decided to stop having school dinners and had only resumed so that he could be with his friends.

But the head teacher had been reluctant to take action, and had indicated shortly after the incident that he did not believe that any serious

assault had taken place. Mr Engelmann said: "There has not been a serious investigation of the underlying facts, or serious consideration of the harm actually inflicted on the applicant by the other boy."

The police concluded that W's assailant may have been guilty of criminal assault but the boy's parents, on legal advice, had refused to accept a formal caution and there would be no prosecution.

In January, the governors decided no action would be taken against W's assailant over the "accident", and said they were satisfied with the school's anti-bullying policy. The chairman of governors had written to the father saying "a campaign against the good name" of the school and its head teacher would not be tolerated.

Outside court, Mr W said the incident constituted serious bullying, which required strong action. "My son is shattered by that [the bullying] and the fact the school appears not to care. Now he is isolated. He, the victim, is being punished."

But the head teacher had been reluctant to take action, and had indicated shortly after the incident that he did not believe that any serious

Boy, 12, is killed as he runs for school bus

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A BOY aged 12 was crushed to death under the wheels of his school bus yesterday as he ran to catch it.

The first-year pupil, who had finished classes for the day at Invermond Community High School in Livingston, West Lothian, was worried that he would miss the double-decker bus, which was turning in the school playground at 3.45pm. Fearing that he would be late home, the unnamed boy sprinted after the bus, waving to the driver, but as he caught up with it, he tripped and fell under the wheels.

The boy's classmates, who were on board the Lothian Regional Transport bus, saw the accident. An ambulance crew was quickly at the scene but the boy was already dead.

The school said: "Everyone is devastated. Many of the pupils had already left the school for the day but several children witnessed the accident and were extremely upset. There is a large turning area in front of the school where the accident occurred. Our thoughts are very much with the boy's family."

An investigation into the accident has been launched by the police and the local education authority.

Peter Burden, operations manager of Lothian Regional Transport, said details were not clear because the driver was badly shaken by the accident. He offered the company's sympathies to the boy's family.

End of term report says that most television regions could do better

By ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

Range and quality of other regional programming praised. Continued to be a major source of high quality children's and factual programmes to the network.

Channel: *The Lottery Show*, based on Jersey's lottery, a failure. Other regional programming of high quality, particularly the themed *Parenting Week*.

Central: regional drama series. *Family Values*, a failure.

ITV rebuked over diet of soap opera

Continued from page 1
dition for it, or else there will be trouble."

The report also lamented the failure of ITV to cater for young adult audiences and Mr Rogers said: "Please, please, please, licences try to get back into comedy in a serious way to try to compete with the other terrestrial broadcasters which are doing better than you in this area."

There was praise, however, for ITV's move into costume drama, and for education programmes, such as *Lights, Camera Action* about the history of the cinema and *Savage Skies* about the weather. The drama-documentary *Hillsborough* was described as particularly outstanding.

Channel 4 was criticised for showing too many repeats, but congratulated for raising the amount of original UK programming from 50 to 53 per cent of its output. *The Big Breakfast* was described as

having "lost its way" while the youth programme, *The Gallerie Show*, was "open to charges of crudeness and superficiality". Overall, however, Channel 4's performance was praised.

The Commission's report was based on an assessment of the quantity and quality of the commercial broadcasters' output, carried out by commission officers and by 11 viewer consultative councils. Each council has 12 to 15 volunteer members who meet four times

a year. They discuss what they have watched and send their views to the commission.

The ITC said: "We don't give too heavy an emphasis to their input because the ITV companies would complain that they are not a representative sample. But we do build up a relationship with them as ordinary viewers and they give us another measure outside our own audience research and our own professional judgment."

The hospital's ethics committee has already been asked to give approval for the operation to go ahead and Mr Westaby says he has been told objections are unlikely.

Developing the system has cost the Radcliffe team £1 million, raised from sponsors, and will cost another £1 million before full clinical trials are completed and the operation is generally available.

Heart

Continued from page 1
developing the pump, we have designed the system to implant it," Mr Westaby said. "We are, therefore, well ahead of the Americans in this and will certainly be able to perform the operation first."

The secret of the Radcliffe system lies in the method of providing battery power. Earlier artificial devices relied on wires being threaded out of the body through the stomach wall for connection to the power supply. Because skin there is loose it is difficult to prevent wires moving and causing infection.

Under the Radcliffe system, the wire is fixed by a small plate screwed on to the skull. It is then connected to the lead from the battery, which is strapped in a pouch on the patient's chest.

This ought to be possible to treat many more patients with heart disease.

Mr Westaby said: "Because of the shortage of donors for transplants only around 300 patients a year can be treated. This means only very ill people are usually considered for this kind of surgery."

With the new pump, however, it will be possible to treat people at a much earlier stage and thus reduce the number of people with heart disease.

By the time of the millennium this will be a standard procedure operation no rarer or more difficult than putting in a heart pacemaker."

The hospital's ethics committee has already been asked to give approval for the operation to go ahead and Mr Westaby says he has been told objections are unlikely.

Developing the system has

repaired. Last August the yard won the lucrative contract to fix the vessel against fierce international competition.

The job nearly did not happen — insurance underwriters were close to sending the 147,000-tonne tanker to the scrapyard.

"One side of the hull was very badly damaged and we know that it was virtually a complete write-off," said a spokesman for Harland and Wolff yesterday.

The ship is being handed back to the owners next week and it will be up to them to decide when to take her away.

"We believe that it will stay in Belfast for a week or ten days, but it's ready to go," the spokesman said yesterday.



Disaster tanker to sail again

The repairs carried out by the yard cost about £20 million, used nearly 3,000 tonnes of steel, and are believed to be the biggest such job ever carried out.

The Norwegian vessel, owned by Acomarit, went aground off Milford Haven in February last year, creating

a 30-mile slick and causing heavy pollution along the Pembrokeshire coast. The salvage operation, impeded by bad weather, took several days to free the tanker from the rocks.

She was towed to Belfast two months later for an inspection to see if she could be

NEWS IN BRIEF

Loyalist prisoners in protest at Maze

Loyalist inmates have begun a protest at the Maze prison because they say that they are being punished for an escape attempt by IRA prisoners last month. Members of the Ulster Volunteer Force are refusing to co-operate in daily head counts at the Belfast jail because they are not allowed to visit friends in other H-blocks, accompanied by prison officers.

The privilege has been withdrawn from all inmates while John Steele, director of security at the Northern Ireland Office, conducts an inquiry into the escape attempt. Other privileges such as home leave, have been withdrawn only from IRA wings. Mr Steele will present his report by the end of the month.

PC may face retrial

A police officer charged with murdering a suspected car thief while on duty faces a retrial after an Old Bailey jury failed to agree on a verdict yesterday. PC Patrick Hodgson, 49, has denied murdering David Ewin near Hammersmith Bridge, southwest London, in April 1995. The jury was discharged.

The Queen has appointed the Duke of Gloucester, her cousin, to be a Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. The Duke, 52, joins the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Kent as royal knights of the most senior order of chivalry, founded 650 years ago next year. The announcement came by tradition on St George's Day.

Planners see the light

The Highways Agency has bowed to pressure from environmentalists and abandoned a scheme to light the M6 between junctions 16 and 19 in Cheshire when it is increased to eight lanes. The Council for the Protection of Rural England had claimed that the glare would intrude on the rural landscape.

Fugitive llama held

A llama that has been roaming wild in Cornwall for six months, eluding all attempts at recapture, was shot with a tranquilliser dart west of Torpoint, close to the smallholding from which it had escaped. Sightings of Sebastian dashing along roads or leaping over 6ft hedges, sometimes with the police in pursuit, were regularly reported in the local press.



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'He said I wanted him dead to get his money'

Man who left RSPCA £8m accused wife of infidelity

BY A STAFF REPORTER

AN ELDERLY widow who is fighting to prevent her late husband's £8 million estate going to the RSPCA was accused by him of having affairs with young gigolos when she was in her seventies.

The High Court in Hong Kong, where she has launched a legal action, was told that Leon Richardson, a businessman and financial commentator, rewrote his will nine days before dying of a heart attack in the colony aged 77 in 1995. He had claimed that his wife Marge, now also 77, to whom he was married for 40 years, cheated on him after a heart attack left him impotent.

In a letter he wrote to a friend in 1994 after the couple had separated, he said: "It's hell to be treated this way after I spent 40 years trying to give her a good life."

In April 1995 Mr Richardson, a dog lover, cut his wife out of the will and left his estate to the RSPCA. The court was told that Mrs



Richardson: dog lover

Richardson had described her "living hell" to William Green, a psychiatrist, in late 1994, saying that her husband had suffered a personality change after a holiday to Cuba in August that year. "He had always been patient and kind but he became angry and attacked everything I said," Mrs Richardson told the court. "He said I was a drug addict. He accused me of having sex with other men. I

am so old it would be laughable if it were not so serious."

She said her husband had accused her of having flings while he was away on business trips and when he was held hostage for 100 days by rebels in Guatemala in 1981. "I have never looked at another man since I met Don [her nickname for him]. I just want the old Don back," she told Dr Green. "He said I wanted to steal his money and I wanted him dead to get it quicker. He said I was evil and in league with the devil and I must be a witch. At first I told him he was losing his mind. Then I realised it would do no good. All I could do was cry and walk away."

John Scott, QC, for Mrs Richardson, read letters that the businessman had written to friends and relatives in late 1994, accusing his wife of plotting with her daughter Rebecca to have him murdered. In one he said that he had survived three attempts on his life, once diving into a crowd to dodge bullets. Mr

Scott said Mr Richardson once accused his wife of planning to poison him.

Earlier Mr Scott read gushing, romantic letters that had been penned by Mr Richardson to his wife during their marriage, some written only weeks before the allegations started in 1994.

Mr Richardson, an American, started his working life with a Hollywood film project, then worked on the atomic bomb project. After emigrating to Australia he started a huge industrial business, spent eight years in Mexico and finally settled in Hong Kong.

His widow, who is now confined to a wheelchair, will give evidence at the trial later this week.

If Mrs Richardson fails to overturn her late husband's will, the RSPCA will receive what the charity believes would be its biggest legacy, enough to run one of its animal hospitals for eight years. The charity's costs are some £40 million a year.



Margie Richardson, in a wheelchair, outside the High Court in Hong Kong

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Tolkien epic lords it again over readers

BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

TOLKIEN'S epic fantasy *The Lord of the Rings* has been voted readers' "favourite book of all time", beating Austen, Dickens and even Shakespeare. The survey by the Folio Society asked people to nominate books that had most influenced them.

The Bible was relegated to thirty-fifth place in the list of 50. The society, a leading publisher of illustrated editions in fine bindings, sent questionnaires to its 50,000 book-buying members. About 10,000 responded.

Tolkien's world of elves, dwarves and old magic, published in 1954, also topped an extensive poll conducted by Waterstone's, the booksellers, in January focus-

ing on 20th-century books. The latest survey did not limit readers to any period.

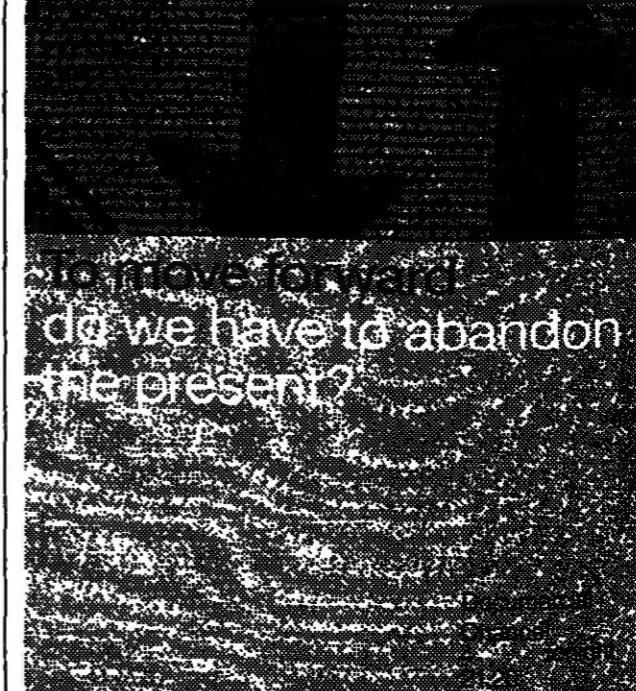
The society published its illustrated edition in 1977, despite the author's opposition to any visual representation of his work. The illustrator was Ingahild Grathmer — a pseudonym for Queen Margrethe II of Denmark. Tolkien was so taken with some sketches she had sent to him, he changed his mind.

Ross Shrimpton, chief executive of the Library Association, said: "It's astonishing that *The Lord of the Rings* has this impact. The idea of a parallel world ... I wonder whether it's something to do with trying to make sense of the world that around us."

THE FOLIO FIFTY



- 1 *The Lord of the Rings* J.R.R. Tolkien
- 2 *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen
- 3 *David Copperfield* Charles Dickens
- 4 *Complete Works* William Shakespeare
- 5 *War and Peace* Leo Tolstoy
- 6 *The Wind in the Willows* Kenneth Grahame
- 7 *Middlemarch* George Eliot
- 8 *Animal Farm* George Orwell
- 9 *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* Thomas Hardy
- 10 *The Jungle Book* Rudyard Kipling
- 11 *I, Claudius* Robert Graves
- 12 *Canterbury Tales* Geoffrey Chaucer
- 13 *Treasure Island* Robert Louis Stevenson
- 14 *Ulysses* James Joyce
- 15 *Jane Eyre* Charlotte Brontë
- 16 *Wuthering Heights* Emily Brontë
- 17 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Mark Twain
- 18 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* Lewis Carroll
- 19 *Sherlock Holmes Selected Stories* Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- 20 *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* Edward Gibbon
- 21 *Dante's Inferno* Dante Alighieri
- 22 *Brideshead Revisited* Evelyn Waugh
- 23 *Cold Comfort Farm* Stella Gibbons
- 24 *The Life of Samuel Johnson* James Boswell
- 25 *Selected Poems* W.B. Yeats
- 26 *The Iliad* Homer
- 27 *Moby Dick* Herman Melville
- 28 *Crime and Punishment* Fyodor Dostoevsky
- 29 *Robinson Crusoe* Daniel Defoe
- 30 *Barchester Towers* Anthony Trollope
- 31 *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* Victor Hugo
- 32 *Diaries* Samuel Pepys
- 33 *The Grapes of Wrath* John Steinbeck
- 34 *Don Quixote* Miguel de Cervantes
- 35 *The Bible* Madame Bovary
- 36 *The Wit of Oscar Wilde* Gustave Flaubert
- 37 *Heart of Darkness* Joseph Conrad
- 38 *Vanity Fair* William Makepeace Thackeray
- 39 *The Plums of P.G. Wodehouse* John Swinburne
- 40 *Gulliver's Travels* Jonathan Swift
- 41 *To Kill a Mockingbird* Harper Lee
- 42 *Brave New World* Aldous Huxley
- 43 *Short Stories* Ernest Hemingway
- 44 *Rebecca* Daphne du Maurier
- 45 *Under Milk Wood* Dylan Thomas
- 46 *Fairy Tales* Hans Andersen
- 47 *Three Men in a Boat* Jerome K. Jerome
- 48 *The Folio Book of Short Novels*



do we have to abandon the present?

Army bi
threaten
of nation

Conservationists at public inquiry oppose £45m expansion of MoD's ranges in Northumberland

Army big guns threaten peace of national park

By PAUL WILKINSON

CONTROVERSIAL plans by the Army for a £45 million expansion of its training areas in the heart of the Northumberland National Park went before a public inquiry yesterday.

Nigel Macleod, QC, for the Ministry of Defence, said it was "almost inevitable" that the Army would need to train troops on big guns in a wilderness area and that such an area would be "environmentally attractive and valued by many".

The AS90 gun and the multi-launch rocket system (MLRS), which the Army wants to operate on its ranges at Otterburn inside the park, were capable of firing over many miles and, with the use of live ammunition, it was essential that training should be in places with no risk of injury to the public.

Northumberland County Council and the national park committee oppose the project, which will involve building a mile of new road, improving 30 miles of existing roads and tracks, setting up more tactical and observation points and building a central maintenance depot and barracks for 125 soldiers. The MoD also wants to construct 46 "gun spurs" — hard-standing without which the 45-ton AS90 would sink into the peat.

Conservationists reject the argument that, with the ending of the Cold War and the

Multiple Launch Rocket System

Crew: 5 Length: 7.1m Max speed: 640km/h Range: 480km Firepower: fires 12 rockets, delivering 7,728 bomblets or 336 scatterable mines up to 24 miles

AS90 155mm self-propelled gun

Crew: 5 Length: 9.07m Max speed: 40km/h Range: 420km Firepower: 39 calibre gun fires a shell up to 15 miles. New models have range of 25 miles

withdrawal of troops from Germany, the only place where the Army can train adequately is Otterburn.

The Army say the expansion would irreparably damage the landscape. Graham Taylor, the park's senior officer, said the development was a "substantial erosion" of what national parks were supposed to be about: conserving the landscape and promoting the environment. Rights of way across the ranges are already closed on about 300 days a year.

The 58,000-acre Otterburn range occupies about a quarter of the park and covers ten Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 11 Sites of Special Nature Conservation Interest, including the habitats of merlins,

black grouse and ring ouzel. There are also 300 significant archaeological sites, including 30 sites permanently off-limits to troops. The range includes 39 working farms, 25,000 sheep and 1,000 cattle.

The inquiry, which opened yesterday in a hotel at Newcastle airport, is costing an estimated £3 million. The investigation by Peter McMaster, an inspector appointed by the Environment Department, is expected to run well into the autumn.

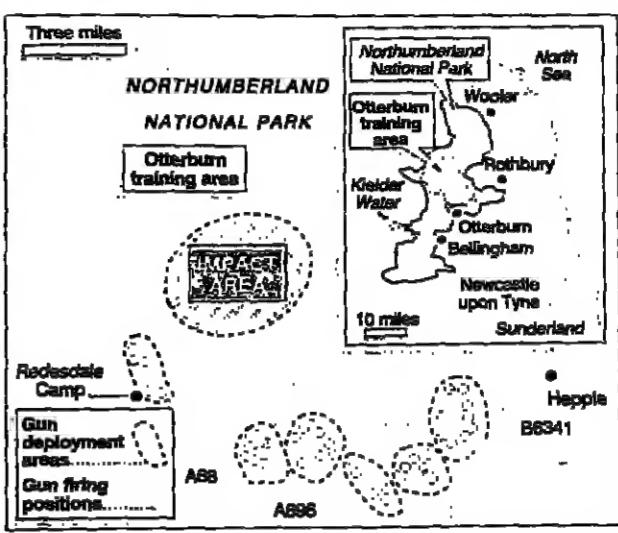
The ranges date from 1911 when Lord Redesdale sold them to the War Ministry after a grouse shooting trip with Winston Churchill, then a junior minister. The national park was created in 1956.

The Army has most of the local civilian population on its side. Lorrimar Farrell, a retired clerk and longstanding Otterburn villager, heads the Association of Rural Communities, which claims 90 per cent support for the expansion among the local population of about 1,900. He sees a plot by the park's controlling committee and the environmentalists to eject the MoD completely. "But they fail to realise that the environment has been successfully managed here for the last 85 years."

The MoD owns some 600,000 acres of land, including 15 per cent of Dartmoor National Park and large tracts of Salisbury Plain. There are 206 Sites of Special Scientific Interest on its land.



Troops on exercise, above, and a rocket test, below, at the Ministry of Defence's firing ranges at Otterburn in the Northumberland National Park



Porpoise 'at risk of extinction' in Celtic Sea

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

FISHING nets may be killing more than 2,000 harbour porpoises a year in the Celtic Sea, raising fears of extinction in the area.

Sixty per cent of the harbour porpoises found dead around England and Wales last year had been entangled in fishing gear, compared with 25 per cent in 1990, according to a government-backed survey. A study of

fishing boats in the Celtic Sea indicated that about 6 per cent of the population, approximately 2,300, were being caught and killed in nets there each year.

Mark Simmonds, of the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, said that the internationally recognised alarm level was 1 per cent of a population being killed by fishermen. "More than 6 per cent or 2,000 animals a year is way above that. We believe that the species will become regionally extinct in the Celtic Sea unless urgent

action is taken." Paul Jepson, of the Institute of Zoology in London, said: "The harbour porpoise is slow to reproduce. At this rate, the population will go into decline."

The findings came from studies by Dr Jepson, funded by the Environment Department, and by the Cornwall Wildlife Trust, backed by the European Union. The trust's findings are to be published in the *International Journal of Marine Sciences*. The animals are believed to be victims of

bottom-set gill nets, which are up to ten miles long and are anchored to the seabed for up to 20 hours.

In summer 1995 the trust's volunteer observers spent 300 days at sea on 20 Irish and Cornish boats in the Celtic Sea, which stretches from the southern tip of Ireland to north Cornwall. They counted 43 dead harbour porpoises in nets, which equated to 2,300 for the whole fleet in the area. The trust said more corpses may have been washed away.

Nitrate linked to diabetes

By NIGEL HAWKES

DOCTORS in Leeds have found evidence suggesting a link between the levels of nitrate in drinking water and childhood diabetes.

In rural areas where nitrate levels are up to four times higher, diabetes is 25 per cent more common, Dr Tricia McKinney of Leeds University and Dr Jonathan Bodansky

of Leeds General Infirmary report. Their samples, from Yorkshire, did not exceed EU nitrate guidelines.

Dr McKinney says the results, published in *Diabetologia*, suggest a link but further studies would be needed to prove it. Increased nitrate levels are largely caused by fertiliser.

Since a register was set up in Yorkshire in 1978, more than 2,000 children have been diagnosed with the disease. Fewer than one in ten has a relative with diabetes so environmental rather than genetic causes are suspected.

In a study in the journal *Epidemiology*, diabetes has been found to be three times more likely than average among American Vietnam War veterans exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange.

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Carey urges clergy to cast dull sermons into the wilderness

BY RUTH GLEDHILL RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, appealed last night for clergy to make their sermons more interesting.

"Dullness is the bane of preaching," he told a three-day international congress on preaching at Westminster Chapel, London. "Never before has there been such a need for an alert, giddy, effective preaching ministry in the Church."

After a generation when preaching went out of fashion, with new churches built without pulpits and clergy spending less time on preparing sermons and more on pastoral visits, office work, music and evangelism, the sermon is making a comeback.

One thousand preachers

from Britain, America, Canada, Australia and elsewhere are meeting in Westminster for the congress, the first of its kind in the country, which is sponsored by the College of Preachers.

The conference is being organised as a panel of judges assesses more than 200 entries in the Times/College of Preachers Preacher of the Year award. The five finalists will deliver consecutive sermons at Durham Cathedral in November.

Dr Carey said preachers could not ignore 200 years of biblical scholarship when preparing sermons. Preaching demanded rigorous intellectual thought and grappling with the text in ways unknown to earlier generations, he said.

Crowded hermit runs out of room

BY OUR RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the country's few remaining hermits wants to build a chapel at his rural hilltop hermitage because of the number of pilgrims who visit to worship with him. Brother Harold, a Franciscan who converted to Roman Catholicism after the Church of England ordained women, hopes to build a small chapel at Shepherd's Law, near Alnwick, in Northumberland.

At present Brother Harold, who follows a medieval way of life, singing the canonical hours of matins, lauds, prime,



Brother Harold needs a new chapel for pilgrims

terce, sext, nones, vespers and compline each day, has to hold services outdoors on special occasions because the four-cell hermitage cannot accommodate the pilgrims. The local authority is expected to approve the plans for the chapel this week.

Ralph Pattison, an accountant from Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, who visits Brother Harold regularly, said: "It is a statement of his faith in the future of Shepherd's Law and the Christian faith. When someone is intoning the psalms and the wind is blowing in the rafters at Shepherd's Law, it's a very moving experience."

Up to 20 people could be accommodated in the proposed 90 square metre chapel, with a nine-metre tower.

Brother Harold, a former mathematics teacher, was attracted to the religious life while studying in Durham. His desire was to recapture the pre-Reformation spirit of contemplation as practised by Northumbrian saints such as Cuthbert and Bede.



Archaeologist Ian Meadows and conservator Rolly Read examining the helmet; below, the warrior's sword

Experts hail discovery of Saxon war chief's armour

BY NORMAN HAMMOND
ARCHAEOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

THE helmet and sword of a Saxon warrior have been found in a shallow grave near Wellingborough in Northamptonshire. The helmet is only the fourth dating to the 7th century to be found in Britain. Made of iron, it is decorated with crest depicting a wild boar.

The find has been hailed by experts as very important. Professor Rosemary Cramp, a leading authority on Saxon archaeology, said: "It is a hugely significant find. This is the armour of one of our first war leaders. It will enable us to get a better picture and increase our know-how of those fascinating times."

The owner of the helmet was a middle-aged man whose thighbones, cranium and teeth were found in the grave. He must have been an important figure to own such armour. Ian Meadows of Northamptonshire Archaeology described him as a "Saxon princeling".

The find is the culmination of 18 months' work carried out by Mr Meadows' team. The roadside site was first studied after the remains were discovered of an 18-acre Roman vineyard capable of producing 15,000 bottles of white



An artist's impression of the iron helmet

wine a year. "It was the first proof of Roman viticulture in Britain, which was exciting enough." Mr Meadows said. "But to find an Anglo-Saxon helmet of this significance within such a relatively short period of time was a huge reward."

The new find has been called the Pioneer Helmet, after Pioneer Aggregates, the gravel company on whose land it was found and which is meeting the costs of conservation. The helmet has a nose guard, crescent-shaped cheekguards and a domed cap, surmounted by a crest in the shape of a boar.

Similar helmets were recovered from Bentby Grange, Derbyshire, in 1861. Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, in 1939, and

Coppedge, York, in 1982. Alongside the body was the man's sword, a yard long and made from iron rods woven together and then welded to leave a delicate pattern on the blade. It was probably local.

The third object in the grave was a small bronze hanging bowl, "very plain and small, about six inches across", Mr Meadows said. The grave also yielded one decorative escutcheon — a small shield-like object 2in across and originally red in colour, with a chequer-board and other designs in millefiori technique made from tiny glass rods.

Most such escutcheons are enamelled; this more elaborate technique together with the helmet "puts this into the premier division of Saxon graves", Mr Meadows said.

The Pioneer Helmet may be aptly named: far from imposing their genes and their culture wholesale on the native British population, the Saxons who penetrated the Midlands were pioneers of a new age and a new relationship with the rest of Europe.

The findings will be placed on public display after two months of conservation work by specialists at the Museum Services conservation laboratory in Leicester. The exact location of the site will remain a secret while further excavations are carried out.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Priest faces sentence for sex assaults

A Roman Catholic priest formally affirmed guilty pleas to 74 sexual offences against 20 people going back almost 40 years in the Central Criminal Court in Dublin yesterday. Father Brendan Smyth, 71, a member of the Norbertine Order, is to be sentenced in July.

He has already served two sentences for sexual offences in Northern Ireland, from where he was extradited last month after a four-year jail sentence. Delays over his earlier extradition to Northern Ireland from the south played a part in the collapse of Albert Reynolds's government three years ago.

Family killed

A 27-year-old mother and her two sons, aged 4 and 12 months, were killed when their car careered out of control and collided head-on with a lorry. The accident happened between Newport Pagnell and Stoke Golding, Buckinghamshire.

Shoppers paged

Electronic pagers are being issued to shoppers to ease the wait for service in busy department stores. The pagers allow customers to visit other parts of John Lewis Partnership stores, knowing that they will be electronically summoned when their turn comes.

Smash and grab

A young gardener's new greenhouse has been taken away by binnies. North Wiltshire District Council is to compensate Ashley Bye, 12, after a message cancelling collection of the old greenhouse went astray and the new one was removed instead.

Caught on film

A man has been charged with theft after he was filmed by a homeowner allegedly breaking into his property in Faversham, Kent. He will appear before Sittingbourne magistrates next month charged with stealing a hedge trimmer and chainsaw.

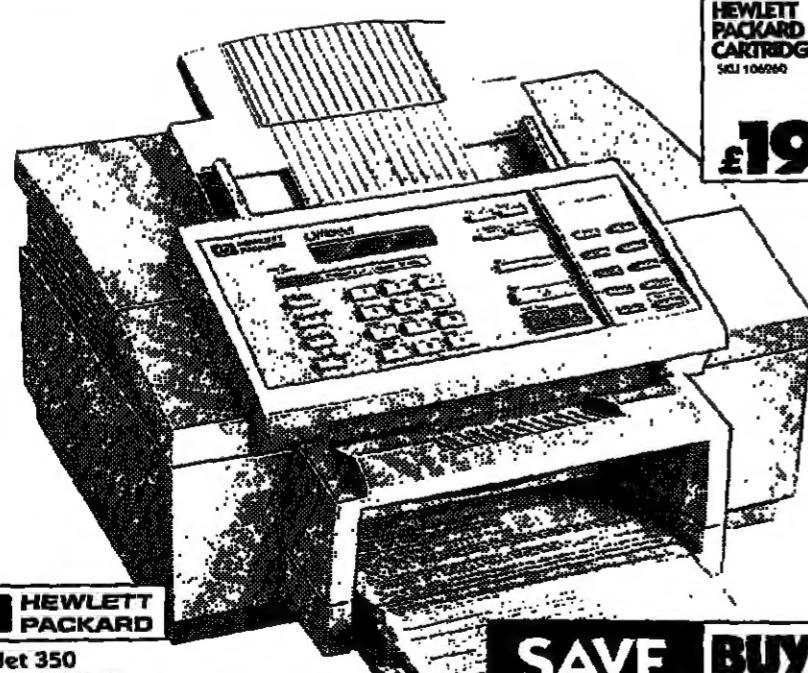
Cheep rate

Bird-lovers who cannot face getting up for the dawn chorus will be able to dial it instead. A two-minute recording will be available on a telephone line set up by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The line, 0891 555178, will be open from May 1 to July 1.

Loft in space

A couple were rescued from a loft after an estate agent accidentally locked them in. They smashed a window of the flat in Birmingham and called for help. The woman was brought down on a hydraulic fire platform because she was too scared to use a ladder.

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City Miss 1550

Cats suffer more cruelty as man's new best friend

By MICHAEL HORNBY

CRUELTY to cats is rising sharply with their increasing popularity, according to the biggest animal welfare charity. They are now Britain's most common pets.

The number of owners convicted of cruelty went up by 27 per cent last year, rising to 235 from 185 in 1995, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said yesterday. Some 21,000 sick, injured or abandoned cats were rescued by the charity.

Dogs, the second most popular pets, remained the most common victims of cruelty. Last year there were 892 convictions for canine cruelty. The rise from 768 cases in 1995 was an increase of 16 per cent.

One cat owner shut his pet in a travel basket and threw it into a freezing canal because he could not stand its constant mewing. Police found it alive after 45 minutes in the water but it died later. Thames magistrates gave the owner a conditional discharge.

Another cat was abandoned with a broken leg because its owner did not want to pay for treatment. The cat was res-



Safe: Poppy the collie with new owner Lizzie Angrave

cued but the toes on its injured leg, which became infected, had to be amputated. The owner was fined £50 but she will not have to start paying by instalments until 2002.

Not all brutality to cats is by owners. A tabby cat trapped in an illegal gin trap for three days before being found by its owner, Sheila Morrow, took Tessa to a vet with the razor-sharp trap locked on to its fractured front leg, which was amputated.

"It is shocking that cat cruelty has risen so sharply," Richard Davies, chief officer

of the RSPCA inspectorate, said. "Many cases cannot be brought to prosecution because it is impossible to trace the owners. It is particularly galling that when someone is convicted of cruelty they are often allowed to go and get another pet because the court has failed to ban them from keeping animals."

The number of domestic cats drew level with dogs four years ago, reaching seven million. By last year it had risen to 7.7 million, while the number of dogs has remained static. Charlotte Morrissey, an RSPCA spokeswoman, said:

"More and more people seem to be switching to cats because they are seen as convenience pets which can be left at home while the owner is out to work and, wrongly, as needing less care and attention than dogs."

Cruelty to dogs continues. Poppy, a six-month-old border collie, was found tied up in a backyard at Banbury, Oxfordshire, with a fractured leg and burns to 50 per cent of its body caused by chip fat. It made a full recovery and is being kept by Lizzie Angrave, the veterinary nurse who found it. The original owner was banned from keeping pets for life.



Sheila Morrow with her pet Tessa, which she rescued from a gin trap. The cat had to have a leg amputated

Anonymous letter gives clue to girl's killer

By MICHAEL HORNBY

AN ANONYMOUS letter giving information about the murder of 16-year-old Claire Tilman in 1993 has been received by her father. Detectives hunting the killer of the schoolgirl, who was stabbed in an alley near her home in Greenhithe, Kent, appealed yesterday for the writer to come forward.

The letter was postmarked Dartford and sent to Geoff Tilman at the Royal British Legion in Greenhithe, where he is a member. It arrived in January, shortly before the fourth anniversary of his daughter's death. Police said it betrayed intimate knowledge about the stabbing and the movements of an individual on the night of her murder.

Detective Superintendent Nick Biddiss said: "What has been written, if it is true, will be something that I am confident will lead to the arrest and charge of the person responsible for the murder."

Mr Tilman said: "This letter could lead to the capture of Claire's killer. I would appeal for the person who wrote it to come forward."

Detectives, who declined to go into details about the letter's contents, said that no individual was named.

Feline fine after 250 miles in suitcase

By ROBIN YOUNG

WHEN Clara Kent unpacked her suitcase at her holiday hotel she found a stowaway inside. Her cat, Tessa, had crept in among her husband's clothes and Lester Kent, 70, a pig farmer, had shut the case, measuring 24 in by 18 in, without realising the pet was asleep inside.

When the couple loaded their cases into Mr Kent's car at Melis, near Halesworth, Suffolk, they were concerned that they could not see Tessa, but left a note for Mr Kent's daughter, Gwen Woolner, 40, who lives near by and was due to look after the cat.

They then drove 20 miles to Mendlesham, Suffolk, where they boarded a coach to Wales. Mr Kent's case with Tessa inside was in the hold for the 250-mile journey to Builth Wells, Powys. Mrs Kent, 69, discovered her pet only when she unpacked. She then telephoned Mrs Woolner who had been searching for Tessa all day.

The management at the Greyhound Hotel agreed to let Tessa stay in the couple's en suite bathroom for their two-night break and the Kents bought a wire cage to carry Tessa home in relative comfort on a seat beside them.

THE SUNDAY TIMES
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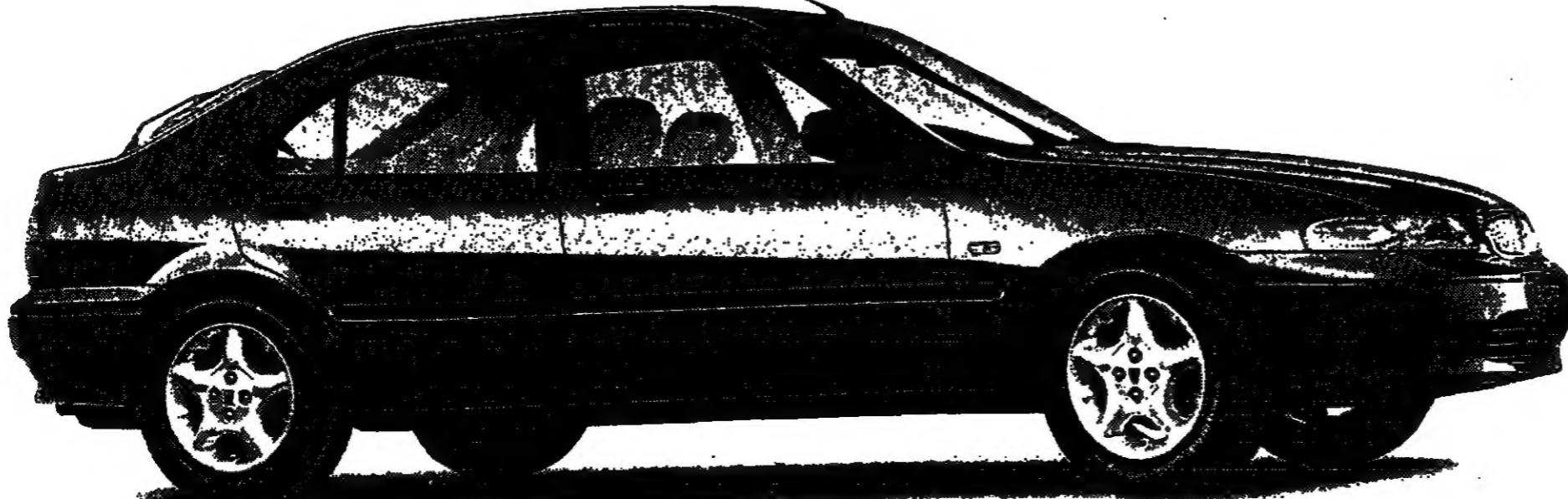
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Relax

Cook mixes old Labour spice into Blair's new recipe

ROBIN COOK, the man who expects within a couple of weeks to become Foreign Secretary, was struggling with the zip on a bright red jacket that was a couple of sizes too big. With his red hair, he looked more than ever like one of Father Christmas's helpers.

But Mr Cook was not worried by the potentially wicked photo-opportunity yesterday in the Yorkshire workshop of a booming maker of foul-weather gear. "Barbara Follett would approve," he remarked of Labour's arbiter of style. He would, he said, wear the jacket on his first trip to Europe as Foreign Secretary.

Mr Cook's neglect of new Labour's style rules matches the leeway that he has earned for his old-Labour allegiances within the Tony Blair circle. Somehow the Labour candidate for Livingston manages to exude the new improved message while still tasting of the classic flavour, from trade union sympathy to European policy.

"I know there are many people in the grassroots of the party who identify me with their values," he said in the back of his car as he drove through west Yorkshire yesterday. "I understand that I represent these values within the collective leadership. Having me there in the collective leadership greatly strengthens Tony's position."

Impressively loyal in his utterances, Mr Cook, 51, has been waging one of his party's most energetic campaigns and, as spokesman on Europe, he is, as he says, "in the thick of it". Over the past week this has largely meant postshots at the Tories' flailing ducks.

Yesterday's typical day began in Aberdeen, included stops in Leeds, Huddersfield and Batley and ended with appearances in Edinburgh. Four television interviews were also slotted in. The exhausting timetable and mobile phone juggling means the occasional slip, such as his

congratulations to a Yorkshire seamstress yesterday for being the "best in Lancashire". Motivation and the odd evening malt whisky were keeping him going, he said. "I have been in opposition 18 years... I have seen too many injustices in my constituency from the party in power. I am determined this time we are going to score for the people we represent."

Occasionally old allegiances slip through. Mr Cook reacts sharply when someone suggests that the late John Smith might not have managed to win this election. The Shadow Foreign Secretary, who managed Mr Smith's campaign for the leadership, was sure that he would have done. Mr Blair was clearly in mind when he volunteered the thought that trust was an issue in this election. "I don't think anybody would have ever challenged John on that front. Different people have different styles of leadership."

Campaigning yesterday,

Asked the same question, Mr Cook talks of all the criteria that Labour would apply to decide whether it would be right for Britain and then quotes Mr Blair's line that membership at the outset would be "unlikely".

Mr Cook, who writes a racing column in a Scottish newspaper, says he is not betting on a Labour victory. But his talk suggests that confidence has got the better of all those warnings against complacency.



Cook identified with an older message

Follett is playing down the image she created

BY DANIEL MCGRORY

VIRTUALLY every photograph of Barbara Follett taken during this campaign has her looking furtive behind dark glasses as though she had just stepped from the dock of the Old Bailey.

The normally thrusting Mrs Follett is indignant at suggestions she has suddenly come over all coy and camera-shy as she courts Labour voters in marginal Stevenage. "I haven't turned into a shrinking violet. It's just that having cameras around intimidate the voters and besides it's not my job to be the mouthpiece for new Labour."

Her public reticence has much to do with her sensitivity at how her many detractors demonise her as the architect of all that is synthetic about new Labour.

It was no accident that anti-abortion campaigners chose her constituency to promote its video for the election, as they regard her as their mortal enemy. Last year a 14-year-old schoolgirl, Emilia Klepacka, caught the headlines after refusing to accept a school prize from Mrs Follett in protest at her stance on abortion. Emilia claimed that Emily's List, Mrs Follett's organisation that supports women seeking to become Labour MPs, insists that members support a woman's right to choose abortion.

Mrs Follett left bemused. Asked if she was anti-abortion, she said, "I do not know anybody who is pro-abortion, but there is no point making women into criminals if they have to take this dreadful option." She added that she was amazed "that so often I seem to be the No 1 hate figure of new Labour".

As a consequence she is a rarity among Labour candidates in professing that she wants to put some distance between herself and the glorious leader. "I get labelled as



Barbara Follett in Stevenage yesterday: "So often I seem to be the No 1 hate figure of new Labour"

having created the image of new Labour when in fact I did all that grooming work under Neil Kinnock to smarten them up. This lot have smartened themselves up. Yes, I'm a friend of Tony's, but I want to win Stevenage because of who I am."

That said, she was up close to Tony Blair last night as he picked Stevenage for the biggest rally so far of his campaign. "Of course it helps. He is our biggest plus," she said.

Her day's campaign outfit is an immaculately cut two-piece black suit complimented by a minimum of jewelled accessories that suggest wealth rather than scream it. "Image is important, but only insofar as it makes whoever you're talking to listen to your message."

"I do get fed up as being portrayed as some flibbertigibbet who only cares about lipstick and making sure the photographer doesn't catch

me with scampi in my teeth," she said, carefully ensuring that all traces of her lunchtime salad were removed.

"I hate being trivialised as some spoilt little rich girl. I have been trying to win a parliamentary seat for Labour since 1983 and I've always picked Tory seats because I like a fight."

"We talk about losing and, if it should happen, whether we should stay. I tell you Stevenage is part of us now. We are not going."

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Old fears force new Labour to put safety first

Tony Blair believes the public has still not completely forgotten Labour's horrors of the past — the "winter of discontent" and the bitter divisions of the early 1980s. Hence the party has no choice but to pursue a safety-first campaign strategy of reassurance. Only in government, Mr Blair thinks, will Labour be able finally to banish these self-inflicted wounds and create new bonds of trust with voters.

Labour leaders have been attacked by left-wing intellectuals for being too conformist. Roy Jenkins, an admirer of Mr Blair, has criticised a "me-tooist" campaign [by Labour] on Europe and Home Office policy and an over-cautious policy on tax". He urged a "greater degree of courageous radicalism".

Mr Blair and his advisers worry that "courageous radicalism" might reignite just those fears they have spent past five years trying to douse.

They remember how the shadow budget's promises on tax and spending unravelled in 1992. Hence, if Labour proposed a tax and spending package along the lines put forward by the Liberal Democrats — [p] on income tax for pay for education and earmarked taxes for health — it would quickly be torn apart during the campaign, such is the legacy of past mistrust. Labour's research shows that among many voters, fears linger about the legacy of "old" Labour on tax and spending, the unions and extremism.

The priority is still to reassure deliberately limiting expectations. This has been reflected in Mr Blair's stance on Europe. He has banged the patriotic drum over Labour's pursuit of the national interest. The sceptic rhetoric is intended to make the party electorally less vulnerable, but Mr Blair does not intend to follow a sceptic policy in office.

Joining a single currency in the first wave may virtually have been ruled out, but a deal is still possible at the Amsterdam summit. Labour disputes the Tory view that it has already given away its negotiating position by agreeing to sign the social chapter and the new employment chapter.



PETER RIDDELL

though this is mainly general intentions. On the contrary, Labour argues that because it is seeking less than the Tories at the summit — for instance, it does not want to reverse the 48-hour working directive — it has more room for manoeuvre on modest extensions to qualified majority voting on regional and environmental policy.

The Labour leader does not believe that other countries will press proposals to extend QMV on foreign policy and to bring defence policy under the European Union umbrella, both of which Labour opposes. Labour also rejects ideas for extending European Union competence over immigration and home affairs policies and thinks that Britain will be granted an exemption because it is an island.

The key is whether there is a flexibility clause, as sought by France and Germany. The danger, of course, is that the other 14 will use such a clause to move towards closer integration, leaving Britain on the outside.

Mr Blair believes that, by taking office for the first time in 18 years, Labour should be able to banish many of the past fears. A Labour government will, he hopes, demonstrate that it is competent, safe and can be trusted. It would then seek to build up a solid record of identifiable, though probably limited, achievements to create the background for a second election victory.

The unstated premise of this strategy is, of course, that the British electorate is instinctively conservative rather than radical.

'Blair: the Movie' on a TV near you

Philip Webster reports on the making of an election broadcast in which the spin doctors (almost) ceded control

TONY BLAIR allows the world into his kitchen and his innermost thoughts in what aides describe as a "ground-breaking" election broadcast to be shown tomorrow.

In what Labour's spin chiefs claim is one of their biggest but most successful gambles of the campaign, the "raw Tony Blair" is set to emerge in a ten-minute film by the acclaimed documentary-maker Molly Dineen.

As a result, the Blair who once thought politicians were a "pain in the backside", wanted to play football for Newcastle and has warned his children to expect a lot more homework when David Blunkett takes over the Education Department will be revealed.

He will be portrayed alongside the passionate Labour leader who wants to get to Downing Street to be a "galvanising force" driving through change to make things better, the man who compares his determination to improve education with Margaret Thatcher's crusade to reform the trade unions.

Asked by Labour's campaign managers to present the man behind the public image — "the unvarnished Tony Blair" — Dineen spent several weeks



Two shots from Molly Dineen's film of life with the Blairs: the Labour leader at table, left, and in the kitchen

talking to and filming Mr Blair playing football, on the tennis court, in his home, in the car and on the train as he travelled around the country. Inevitably it will be dubbed "Blair: the Movie" and compared with the pioneering Hugh Hudson production on Neil Kinnock in the 1987 election.

The broadcast was controlled and stylised, Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell, Mr Blair's leading image-makers, took

probably their biggest risk in handing over the task of presenting the private face of Mr Blair to Dineen, an outsider whose reputation for independence and reluctance to take political direction had preceded her.

The Blairs, who are famous for guarding their privacy, allowed Dineen, who wielded the camera, and a sound engineer into their home in Islington, north London. There Mr Blair is pictured

standing by the refrigerator talking about "all the rubbish" that politicians have to do as a shot is shown of him signing a Labour poster. "You have to keep a grip on yourself and hope that your humanity sees you through," he says.

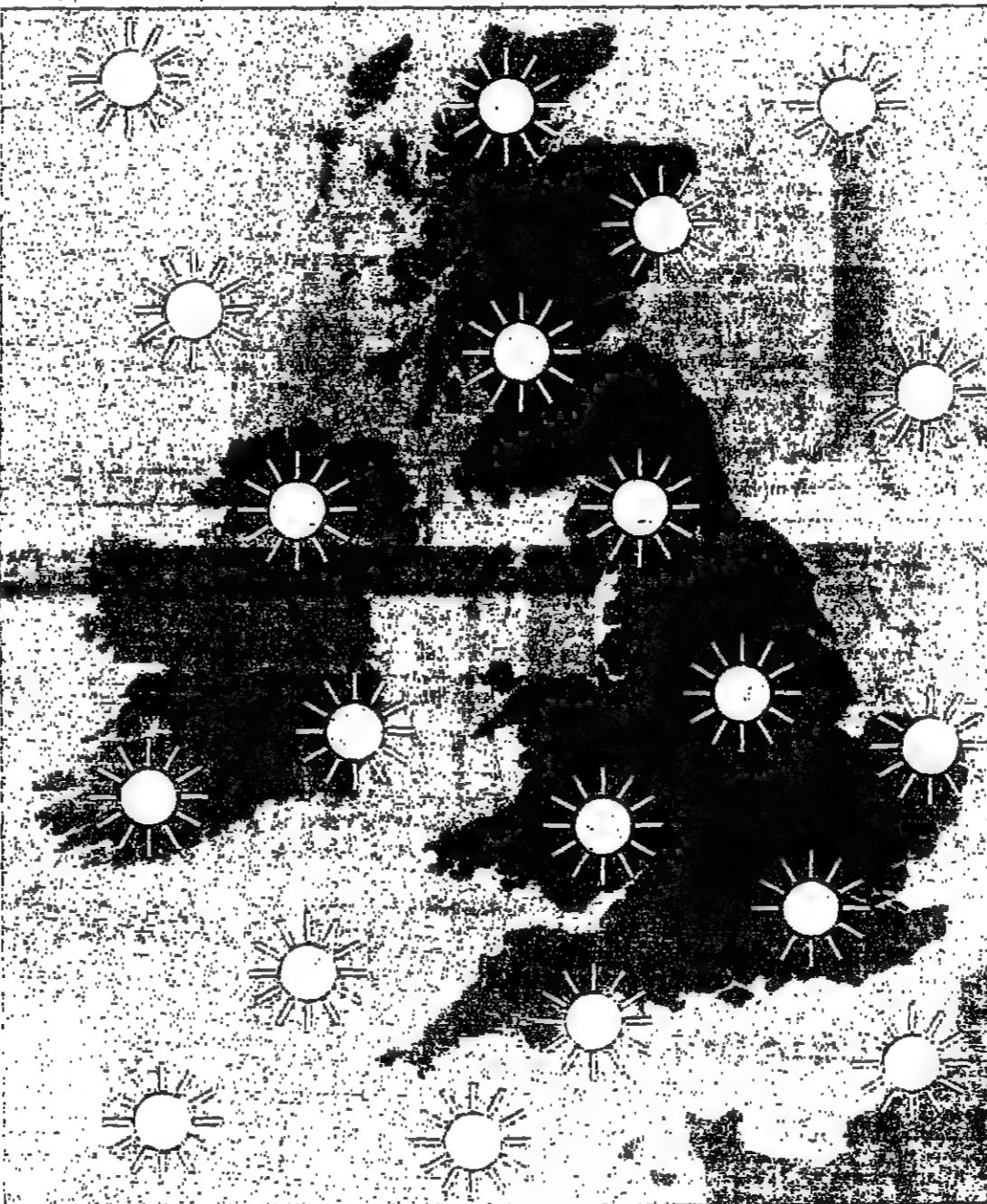
He tells how he tried in vain to get his father to help him to get a trial with Newcastle United. He tells how he understood from his father why some people who had done well in life thought the Tory party was for them, and the Labour Party was not. Asked by Dineen why he was not a Tory, he replies: "In the end you fulfil your ambitions better in a society where people have some sense of duty towards other people."

The Labour leader also tells how, when his father had a stroke when he was ten or 11, "all our lives changed"; and how, when his mother died when he was 21, a new sense of urgency came into his life.

Mr Mandelson said: "Exceptionally for an election broadcast, where we would normally have complete control, we gave Molly a lot of latitude. The version she presented us with is largely the version that will go out."

Dineen said of the media team: "They have in no way forced things in or out." She added that Mr Blair had been an excellent subject for a documentary.

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ELECTION TRAILER

Conservatives: Michael Heseltine, Brian Mawhinney, Stephen Dorrell in the South; Lord Archer in Scotland; John Gummer in the Midlands; William Hague in Wales; Ian Lang in the North West; Michael Howard in Yorkshire; Malcolm Rifkind in the North East.

Labour: David Blunkett in Scotland; Derek Foster, Andrew Smith in South East; Robin Cook, Donald Dewar in North West; Gavin Strang in East; Ally Darling in West Midlands.

Liberals: Paddy Ashdown in the West Country; Peter Thurnham, Simon Hughes in London; Shirley Williams, David Steel in the South West; Earl Russell in Berkshire.

On screen:

Liberals: Liberal Democrat election broadcast ITV 6.45pm, C5 7.55pm, BBC1 9.30pm, BBC2 10.30pm, C4 11.30pm. Election Call: Radio 4 & BBC1 9am with Gordon Brown. News at Ten: Michael Brunson interviews Paddy Ashdown. Radio 5 Live: The A-Z of Elections: S for Spin-doctors.

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Fig. 11. The water-lily fold for table napkins.

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West Lothian bear could make life grisly for Blair

THE candidate stared at his constituents' rock garden. "Aubretia. Marvellous. Never been a better year for aubretia. Splendid for bees! I know, I'm a former bee-keeper."

"When I first became an MP I had four hives. My bees swarmed. I took a day off Westminster to deal with them. I missed eight votes on the Finance Bill. The Chief Whip called me in. '—your—bees,' he said."

Tam Dalyell, Labour candidate for Linlithgow, is too much the gent to say the word, though his little audience in the council estate at Whitburn, near Bathgate, would hardly have flinched. Among the many English myths which have grown around the great, shambling, lugubrious, bear-like Etonian baronet, whose grandfather and great-grandfather were Governors of Bengal but who does not answer to "Sir Thomas", is the notion that Dalyell represents some wild, romantic, heather-strewn fastness in the misty Scottish border.

He does not. Though the Linlithgow end of his constituency is quite classy and pretty, Bathgate is not, and Bathgate is where the voters are. This is scrappy, maimed country, hit hard by the demise of Scottish coal and steel. The omnipresent rushing sound is neither the wind nor the tumbling burn, but the M8 from Glasgow to Edinburgh.

"He was an MP before I was born," said his earnest, red-haired, thirty-five-year-old assistant, Harry, in awestruck tones, as the great man lumbered up a pathway to a back door at which stood a woman in a bedraggled yellow dressing gown, fog hanging from her lip. "Just win for us, Tam," called a

wellwisher from the pavement. "We'll get them out this time."

Dalyell will win. His 1992 majority over the SNP was about 8,000. But his well-wisher may not realise that the man she hopes will help get the Tories out could create infinitely more trouble for a future Labour government than any Tory could. Dalyell's constituency used to be called West Lothian. It was Dalyell who framed and made famous the West Lothian question — that rock upon which Scottish devolution may founder. It was Dalyell who helped to wreck devolution last time.

This is an independent voice new Labour would kill if they could. Why, as he nears the age when others retire, dare they not touch him? A

tion over Westland and the Belgrano; Dalyell whose campaign to clear Libya's name over the Lockerbie bombing looked every month less fanciful than we thought. This relentless, obsessive, unfailingly courteous political sleuth is often infuriating — and often right. He is a party manager's nightmare.

"There's nothing they can give me, nothing that I want," he told me.

"He's the best MP in Westminster — and the worst driver in Bathgate," said Harry to me. "We offer to drive, but he insists." Dalyell's total disregard of other traffic, as drivers blocked by his eccentric path hawk and fume, mirrors his insouciance at the mayhem his campaigns at Westminster can cause. His old Rover, with rusting sills, was stové in and unrepainted. "Less likely to be stolen. But I've painted it with anti-rust paint."

This is an independent voice new Labour would kill if they could. Why, as he nears the age when others retire, dare they not touch him? A



Tam Dalyell campaigning in Whitburn yesterday: relentless, obsessive, infuriating — and often right

morning with him and his devoted team in coal-smoky Whitburn (it snowed) and an egg, sausage and black pudding lunch in the tidy, comfy home of James and Nelly Boyle made the answer clear. Thus big-stage MP knows his

backstage constituency. He remembers every concern and treasures his Labour helpers, who treasure him.

"He got us back our railway," said Harry. "You might think that small compared with Libya; but not here."

"Ah!" bellowed Dalyell, discovering who a constituent's mother was. "Friend of the late Jane Kelly! A superb knitter!"

"It's not a dog, Tam," pleaded a retired shop steward, complaining about a neighbour's dog excrement. "It's a bloody elephant!" Tam looked grave — as grave as over the bombing of Iraq. If he keeps up the fight against dog dirt, Linlithgow will indulge Tam Dalyell his little Westminster hobbies.

Scottish Queen to lose a digit but keep a role

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

THE Queen would be head of state of an independent Scotland but would lose the royal prerogative and a digit in her title — becoming Elizabeth I or Scotland.

Alex Salmond, leader of the Scottish National Party, said yesterday that an independent Scotland would not become a republic unless the people so decided. The Queen would retain a ceremonial role when resident in Scotland, probably opening the Scottish parliament and delivering a Queen's Speech.

However, the royal prerogative, which allows the Prime Minister to rule the country in the Queen's name without reference to a written constitution, would be removed. The House of Lords would also be "swept aside", Mr Salmond said.

Parliament's day-to-day running would be overseen by a Chancellor of Scotland, a figure equivalent to the Speaker at Westminster. Mr Salmond, speaking on the BBC's *Election Call*, said: "There would be radical changes, which would remove all the pomp and little circumstance of the panoply of the post-imperial monarchy that we see in London."

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Santer unbowed by furious reaction to Eurosceptic attack

FROM MICHAEL DYNES IN BRUSSELS

BRUSSELS insisted yesterday that Jacques Santer's attack on Euroscepticism had not been an attempt to interfere in the general election campaign.

Nikolaus van der Pas, the European Commission's senior spokesman, said that Mr Santer had merely wanted to stem the increasing "pessimism and scepticism" across Europe. It was not an attack on Britain, he said.

Mr Santer, President of the Commission, spoke out on Monday against Eurosceptic "demon merchants" and their "unjustified and misplaced" criticism of European integration. He also complained about their failure to acknowledge the European Union's achievements.

Mr van der Pas said that the President did not regret his comments, but had been dismayed by the reaction in Britain. "We regret that it has become a party political and electoral issue," he said. "It is

not our intention to interfere in national elections or campaigns.

The President's speeches should receive wide attention. But this went beyond all my expectations. With hindsight, we are all much more intelligent."

Some commission officials admitted privately that they had been dismayed by the timing, if not the content, of Mr Santer's speech. It was delivered in English to the Dutch Association of European Journalists in Amsterdam. "No British member of the Commission's staff was given advance warning of what Mr Santer intended to say," one source said. "We have been sent reeling by the reaction in the British media.

"Mr Santer's speech has given the pro- and anti-European camps in the British election a rallying point. It was the last thing anyone here wanted."

The source said that Mr

Santer's decision to delete a critical reference to the Conservative election poster that depicted Tony Blair as a puppet sitting on the knee of Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, was an indication that he was aware of the sensitive nature of his speech. "Had we known what was coming, we might have been able to highlight the consequences," he added.

"It is only the British members of the Commission who are aware of the current row," the source said. "It is all going on between London and Brussels. No other country is even aware of it. I know the popular press called Mr Santer a 'pipsqueak,' but no one here knows what that means. Besides, they had called him much worse things in the past."

Sir Leon Brittan, Vice-President of the Commission, yesterday attempted to calm the controversy by disclosing that the speech had been arranged long before the date of the general election had been fixed.

Sir Leon emphasised that Mr Santer had been addressing Eurosceptics throughout the EU. He said that the speech had contained favourable comments about Britain, such as its demand for reform of the common agricultural policy, its support of EU expansion in the East, and its advocacy of market economies.

Sir Leon said that British politicians could not endlessly criticise the Commission and then accuse it of hitting below the belt when it defended itself.

Despite being inundated with requests for interviews from the British media, the Commission President failed to appear yesterday. His beleaguered staff said "his diary is full".

Simon Jenkins, page 20
Letters, page 21



Kenneth Clarke stirring the pot at Turner's meat pie factory in Tunbridge Wells, where Archie Norman is the Tory candidate

Devolution 'hands Brussels a weapon'

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN MAJOR will say tonight that Labour's devolution plans would allow European federalists to impose laws on a "weakened and divided" Britain.

The Prime Minister will try to put Tony Blair on the defensive by linking the potential break-up of the United Kingdom to the threat posed by Brussels. He will say in a speech at Aberdeen that each of the countries within the United Kingdom would be less influential within Europe at a time when "ultra-federalists" were seeking to expand the power of Brussels.

Mr Major will also return to Labour's change of stance over the tax-raising powers of

a Scottish parliament. He will end a two-day visit to Scotland by trying to undermine Labour's policy on devolution, which he ridiculed yesterday as being riddled with U-turns and inconsistencies.

Mr Major yesterday trailed tonight's speech by telling voters in Perth that "the devolution proposals of our political opponents are the first step on a route that inevitably will lead to break-up of the United Kingdom."

There is great banting being fought during the course of the general election that many people have not seen. It is a battle about the very nature of the United Kingdom itself."

Simon Jenkins, page 20
Letters, page 21

Ken finds campaign duty as nice as pie

Damian Whitworth observes the Chancellor's electioneering style on a long, hard pub crawl

KENNETH CLARKE was told by an admiring onlooker that he had never looked more fetching. "I know," the Chancellor replied, patting his hairnet. "And I have worn one of these before you know."

The hairnet was part of a forfeit that he had to pay in order to get his pie. His pie was to be a treat to round off a long, hard pub crawl.

Mr Clarke's day started in Crawley, a Tory marginal recently vacated by the Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames, who has gone to the safer pastures of Mid Sussex. His departure has left a big gap and the Chancellor arrived yesterday to give heavyweight support to the Tory candidate Josephine Crabb.

While Mr Clarke is not in the super heavyweight class of Mr Soames, he is very much a pie and a pint man and after talking to local business-

men yesterday morning he adjourned to the Jordans Toby public house and kicked off with a pint of bitter.

Unfortunately his drinking style was a little cramped by a phalanx of reporters all wanting to ask him about the Tories' civil war over Europe. "I am not tired of Europe but I am getting rather tired of this debate about Europe," he sighed.

"Are those the customers behind that barrier of journalists?" he asked, and broke through both the media and the Tory ladies who were accompanying him and made a beeline for the lads at the bar.

A grinning, sharp-suited regular said that he would vote Conservative if Mr Clarke reduced the tax on beer. "Come on Ken, get the beers in mate," he bellowed.

"I do keep reducing the duty," Mr

Clarke replied. "But that isn't a shameless appeal to beer drinkers but to stop smuggling," he added quickly, as reporters sensed that they might have discovered secret drinkers' charter.

Mr Clarke slouched back his pint and then set off for another engagement, which turned out to be another pub 200 yards down the road. Another pint for Mr Clarke and this time he ensconced himself in a quiet corner and the press were kept at bay so that he could drink in peace.

Mr Clarke looks as if he has eaten a few pies in his time and that was what was on offer yesterday. Unfortunately, he had to watch his pie being made before he could eat it.

At the Turners meat pie factory in Tunbridge Wells, Mr Clarke was met by Archie Norman, the Tory candidate and boss of the supermarket

chain Asda. Mr Clarke was also met by a group of men in white coats. All the visitors had to put on white coats too. Then out came the hair nets. And then helmets and huge Wellington boots like small canoes. What could be in there? Would it be raining steak and ale pies?

In the event it was less dramatic and Mr Clarke told the press not to be so silly. "I've worn these before in other places," he said. He didn't specify where. He stirred a huge cauldron of slop and smiled bravely.

"We could be the witches in Macbeth," he told Mr Norman. Mr Clarke watched the slop being pumped into tins. Was he looking forward to his pie?

"I once worked in a bakery and that put me off eating bread for about three months," he said, which didn't quite answer the question.

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Jiang summit in Moscow sends warning to West

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Jiang Zemin of China began a five-day visit to Russia yesterday to end decades-old tensions between the two neighbours and lay the foundations for a partnership to challenge America's global supremacy.

As Russia and China face growing strains in their relations with the West, the two old Communist rivals appeared ready to take the advice of Deng Xiaoping, the last Chinese leader, who wanted to close the past and open the future.

Two-Russian trade now amounts to some £5 billion a year, and Moscow has re-established itself as China's main arms supplier with the sale of advanced Su-27 fighters and other weapons.

The visit's highlight will be the signing of a treaty between China and its neighbouring former Soviet republics, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The agreement sets out effectively to demilitarise the 5,000-mile border area, once the most fortified frontier in the world.

A separate agreement to demarcate Russia's 2,700-mile

frontier with China has already been signed and a border commission is expected to complete its work this year.

Western diplomats in Moscow are eager to scrutinise the wording of a "joint declaration" that will be signed today by Mr Jiang and President Yeltsin. "In the declaration Russia and China will express their vision of how to form the new international order of the 21st century and will speak out against claims by any country to the role of absolute leader," said Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the Kremlin spokesman and

foreign policy adviser, in a dig at Washington.

The tone of the visit could not be more different from the strained relations revealed last month when Mr Yeltsin met President Clinton in Helsinki and they "agreed to disagree" over Nato's eastward enlargement.

Much is being made of Mr Jiang's ties to Russia. Like Li Peng, the Chinese Prime Minister, who studied in Moscow in the 1950s, Mr Jiang is a fluent Russian-speaker from his days spent training at the ZIL car factory in Moscow. He won the admiration of many Russians by asking to visit Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy's estate south of Moscow.

Nevertheless, experts say there are limits to the Sino-Russian romance, and it is unlikely that the partnership will ever mature into a formal alliance. While it may be expedient to help one another, ultimately both require Western money and expertise to achieve economic reform.

Also, while the politicians may have settled their differences, there remain deep-seated suspicions on both sides. The Chinese fear the day when the Russians have recovered their power and begin once more to flex their muscles in Asia. The Russians, particularly those living in Siberia,

are convinced that China will one day try to swallow Russia's Far East.

Sport chief killed: The head of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, Valentin Sych,



President Jiang of China is greeted in Moscow yesterday by Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Russian Prime Minister, at the start of a five-day visit

are convinced that China will one day try to swallow Russia's Far East.

Sport chief killed: The head of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, Valentin Sych,

was shot dead in an apparent contract killing early yesterday near his villa outside Moscow, police said. His wife was wounded when a man sprayed their car with automatic rifle fire. Although hit in the leg, she contacted the police by mobile phone.

Mr Sych, whose national hockey squad was flying to Helsinki today for the world

championships, spoke out recently against the involvement in sports of Russia's mafia-style gangs. (Reuters)

Leading article, page 21

IMF says Bonn will miss single-currency target

FROM DEBORAH COLLCUTT IN FRANKFURT

GERMANY cannot solve its multibillion-pound budget deficit in time to qualify for European currency union, according to an International Monetary Fund report to be published today.

In the report, World Economic Outlook, the IMF predicts that, contrary to government figures, Germany's budget deficit will be 3.3 per cent of its gross domestic product — above the 3 per cent ceiling set by the Maastricht Treaty — and will fail to qualify. Ten economic and monetary union (EMU) candidates are set to be selected in spring 1998.

Jens Tietmeyer, the president of the German Bundesbank, also appeared to be putting the brakes on European currency union yesterday when he said a delay in the starting date could be considered.

Addressing leading German bankers, he indicated that if the leading players in the European Union did not qualify for the launch of the euro currency on January 1, 1999, the date would have to be put back.

"It is the case that the big

countries fail to meet the criteria, then a delay could be considered," Herr Tietmeyer said. "If they cannot meet the convergence criteria in time, it would be better to say so sooner."

But he said earlier that the Bundesbank was operating on the assumption that the euro would begin on time. He refused to be drawn on whether Germany and other countries would qualify, calling it premature speculation.

His comments came ahead

of the first-quarter publication of the 1997 economic prognosis by six leading German institutes, which is expected to show that Germany's budget deficit will leave it outside the qualification margin.

Leads from the report, released officially in Bonn late yesterday, predicted growth in 1997 of 2.25 per cent — below the institutes' autumn 1996 expectations of 2.5 per cent, a figure also favoured by Theo Weigel, the Finance Minister.

The institutes, independent think-tanks which advise the Government on economic policy, also foresee average unemployment rising this year to 4.28 million, from their 1996 predicted average of 4 million.

According to the economists, this means Germany will be left with a budget deficit of up to 3.2 per cent of its gross domestic product — above the 3 per cent Maastricht ceiling — and failing to qualify for EMU.

However, the report insisted that Germany, in particular, should not be excluded solely on the basis of its economic performance, which is hindered by unification costs.

The conductor was moved later to Buchenwald concentration camp, from where he was rescued by his family. He moved to Manila, in the Philippines, where he was again imprisoned, this time by the invading Japanese.

When the war ended, he moved to America, where he conducted and taught. A biography, *Dachau Song*, by Paul Cummins, was published in 1992. Zipper leaves a nephew and niece.

Nazi camp orchestra leader dies

FROM REUTER
IN LOS ANGELES

HERBERT ZIPPER, a Vienna conductor who formed a secret orchestra in Dachau concentration camp during the Second World War, has died. He was 92.

A spokeswoman at St John's Medical Centre in Santa Monica, California, said yesterday that he died of lung cancer on Monday.

Imprisoned in Dachau by the Nazis, Zipper recruited inmates who had played with orchestras in Vienna and Munich, and they formed a secret orchestra which entertained prisoners on Sundays in an abandoned building in the prison grounds.

The conductor was moved later to Buchenwald concentration camp, from where he was rescued by his family. He moved to Manila, in the Philippines, where he was again imprisoned, this time by the invading Japanese.

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Juppé offers France more austerity

FROM SUSAN BELL IN PARIS

ALAIN JUPPÉ launched the election campaign of France's centre-right ruling coalition yesterday by pledging to continue policies that have so far helped to make him the country's most unpopular Prime Minister in modern history.

While emphasising his commitment to Europe and to gradual market-oriented economic reforms, M Juppé said that he planned to run the campaign on his vision of France's future, rather than on his record that has seen unemployment rise to an unprecedented 12.8 per cent. He pledged to cut public spending, ease the tax burden, continue privatisation and reduce bureaucratic regulation.

There was evidence of a pre-election healing of Gaullist party divisions as M Juppé praised the achievements of Edouard Balladur, the former Prime Minister. M Balladur also attended a luncheon meeting of centre-right leaders at the Hôtel Matignon for the first time since 1995 when he ran unsuccessfully against Jacques Chirac in the presidential elections.

M Juppé followed closely the line taken by President Chirac during his speech to the nation on Monday evening in which he announced his decision to dissolve the National Assembly and call a snap two-round election for May 25 and June 1. Nothing in his address suggested that the country could expect any radical departures from his Government's current policies of

reform and austerity. By promising more of the same, M Chirac has, in effect, turned the election into a referendum on himself and his policies — making the poll the biggest gamble of his political career.

According to Pascal Perrineau, a political analyst, if the country fails to give M Chirac the vote of confidence he needs to ensure him a renewed, if sharply reduced, majority, he will end up the Fifth Republic's weakest President yet.

M Chirac's decision to dissolve the National Assembly in the absence of any political or national crisis — a precedent since the Fifth Republic was formed in 1958 — provoked heated reactions. Lionel Jospin, the Socialist

Opposition leader, led a chorus of disapproval, calling the move "a dissolution of convenience" and accusing the majority of preparing the ground for "a new step towards harsh capitalism".

In a virtuoso display of colourful rhetoric, Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme-Right National Front, dubbed M Chirac's decision "an electoral hold-up" and a "shameful swindle", before being abruptly cut short by the privately owned television station TF1.

In a front-page article *Le Monde* noted that the election decision "was the first time that the head of state had used this prerogative [of dissolution] without any motive other than his own interest".

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Gambia 86p	£1.31	New Zealand 30p	49p	Uganda 90p	£1.31
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Saddam defies America with 'mercy mission' to fly home Mecca pilgrims

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU
IN NICOOSA

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein of Iraq yesterday defied a no-fly zone policed by American, British and French warplanes by sending helicopters to collect Iraqi pilgrims from the Saudi border.

President Clinton warned Saddam not to use religion to evade international obligations, and vowed to uphold the air exclusion zone.

But he gave no sign of how America would retaliate. Earlier, the White House had said it would "respond appropriately" but would not shoot down civilian helicopters.

Iraq's official news agency said that a number of helicopters arrived safely at the Saudi border to transfer "sick and weary" pilgrims returning from the annual Haj in Mecca. State-run newspapers insisted America had no right to object to a "mercy mission".

The latest Iraqi challenge, designed to provoke Washington and highlight United Nations Security Council divisions, came two weeks after Baghdad sent an aircraft carrying pilgrims to Mecca. The Security Council, in a setback for the United States, issued a statement calling for Iraq not to fly more planes without its consent, but refrained from calling the flight a breach of the embargo. China, Russia and France showed sympathy for Iraq's position. Iraqi newspapers made clear yesterday that Baghdad's policy was to highlight rifts in the once-formidable alliance against Baghdad and prove that sanctions were weakening. Dissidents said Saddam, 60 next Monday, appeared keen to have another "victory" to present to his people in what the Iraqi media still call the Mother of All Battles.

"America is the loser," trumpeted *Babel*, a newspaper owned by Sad-

dam's eldest son, Uday. It added that the Security Council's "failure to condemn Iraq after flying its sick pilgrims to Mecca by plane is a clear indication of this".

Baghdad feels on even safer ground by challenging the no-fly zone over southern Iraq, declared by America, Britain and France five years ago to protect the mainly Shia population. The West's Gulf War allies cited an earlier Security Council resolution warning Iraq

against mistreating minorities as justification, but Baghdad has always insisted the move had no backing in international law.

Irqi opposition groups also accused Saddam of shamelessly exploiting religion for political purposes by using the pilgrimage issue to enhance his standing in Arab and Muslim countries, where there is mounting concern for ordinary Iraqis after nearly seven years of trade sanctions. Diplomats said

Saddam had also been emboldened by popular Arab world resentment that Washington has failed to take a strong line against Jewish settlement activity in east Jerusalem.

Dubai, Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia said yesterday that 111 nationals were confirmed dead and 100 were still missing after the fire that killed more than 840 Muslim pilgrims last week. Another 50 Pakistanis are still in Mecca hospitals. (Reuters)

Iran holds wargames to counter surprise attack threat

BY MICHAEL BINION, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

IRAN yesterday began a large-scale military exercise in the Gulf intended to prepare crack Revolutionary Guards against a feared surprise attack by America or Israel.

The Clinton Administration is also coming under intense pressure in Congress to launch retaliatory strikes against Iran because of a strong suspicion that it had a hand in the June 1996 bombing of barracks at Dhahran in Saudi Arabia in which 19 Americans were killed.

The three-day wargames began as America launched a diplomatic offensive to win European support for Washington's trade boycott of Iran. Peter Tarnoff, a senior State Department official, will have talks in London today with the Foreign Office. He will urge European leaders to take a tough stance next week when they consider new sanctions over Tehran's involvement in the assassination of Kurdish leaders in Germany.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, yesterday went to the Gulf coast to witness the amphibious operations. Some 200,000 troops will take part in an exercise codenamed "Tariq ol Qods" (Road to Jerusalem) covering four provinces. They will test surface-to-air, shore-to-sea and surface-to-surface missiles. Brigadier-General Rahim Safavi, the Revolutionary Guards' deputy commander, said they had the technical knowledge and skills to build missiles themselves.

The Iranian exercises, involving about 200,000 troops, are among the largest in recent times. Ayatollah Khamenei arrived in Bandar Abbas, the port overlooking

US rebuffs jazz star over party record

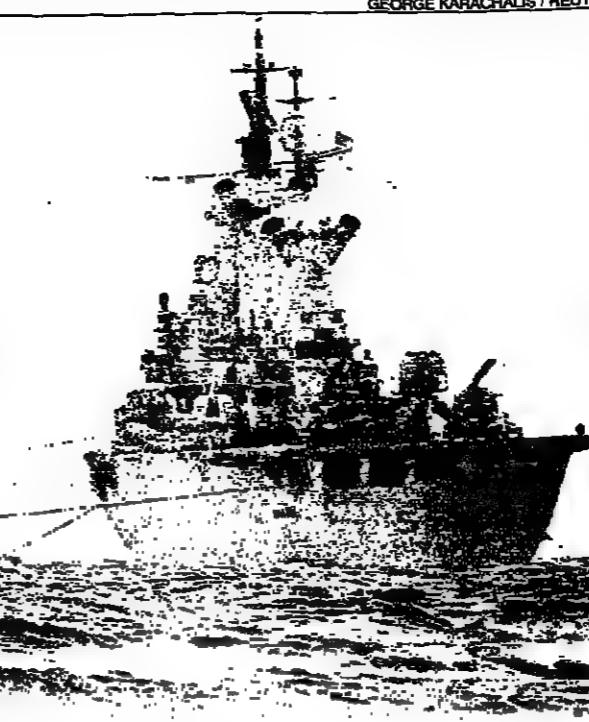
FROM DAVID ADAMS
IN MIAMI

ARTURO SANDOVAL, the world-renowned Cuban jazz trumpeter who defected seven years ago, says he has been denied American citizenship because he once belonged to the Cuban Communist Party.

When he applied for citizenship last year Mr Sandoval, 46, never imagined there would be a problem. A friend and disciple of Dizzy Gillespie, he is best known for his energetic, infectious brand of jazz melodies fused with Afro-Cuban rhythms.

His life in exile is the epitome of the American dream. Granted political asylum in 1990, he has since won three Grammy music awards; is an honorary citizen of several American cities and Orlando's Disneyworld; and has been invited to the White House and performed for President Clinton. He played at the closing ceremony of the Atlanta Olympics, and provided musical backing for Madonna at the Oscar awards ceremony from the EU.

French urge power handover in Zaire



Tugs try to free the Italian flagship *Vittorio Veneto*, which went aground off Vlore in Albania while heading a mission to secure the port

Italian expedition to pacify Albania goes aground

FROM TOM WALKER
IN VLORE

THE Italian-Greek operation to secure the rebel-held port of Vlore in southern Albania went badly awry yesterday as its Italian command ship ran aground in heavy seas. The 9,700-tonne cruiser *Vittorio Veneto* drifted on to a sandbank as a gale buffeted the coastline.

amusing a local population whose gangland bosses are distinctly wary of the 800-strong troop influx.

"It's stupid. They should have known better," said Grigor Seferi, a port pilot. The incident is upsetting for the Italians, anxious to show their military competence in their first opportunity in over half a century to lead a multinational force. Today

Admiral Nicola Azzolini, on board the stricken vessel, hands overall command of Operation Alba to General Luciano Polani, marking the formal end to its seaborne phase.

The *Vlore* exercise began more promisingly, with a well-coordinated pincer movement on Monday morning. Elite Bersaglieri 18th regiment soldiers arrived by road from their

overnight base at Fier, 25 miles to the north, and 300 Marines skinned ashore in dinghies and landing craft launched from the amphibious assault craft *San Giusto*, supported by the then mobile *Vittorio Veneto* and a minesweeper.

Spokesmen for Operation Alba in Tirana have said the troops will set up joint patrols with police in Vlore.

WORLD SUMMARY

Sanctions imposed on Burma

Washington: The United States attempted to increase Burma's isolation from the international community yesterday, imposing trade sanctions in protest at persistent repression by the military dictatorship (Tom Rhodes writes). Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, announced a ban on all US-American investment in the Asian nation.

The embargo, designed to make neighbouring countries bring greater pressure on Burma to improve its human rights record, will not affect existing American interests.

Bottled history

Johannesburg: After a string of failed money-making ventures, Winnie Mandela has started selling bottles of soil taken from the modest Soweto home she once shared with Nelson Mandela, at the equivalent of £6.50 each (Ingrid Gilmore writes). The tiny bottles, sold as from "Heroes Acre", come with a "certificate of authenticity". The house has for several years been a regular stop for tourists and the bottles are selling well.

Algeria toll rises

Algiers: Islamic fundamentalists have murdered 93 villagers in the worst massacre in five years of Algeria's civil war. The overnight massacre took place in Hadouch Bougħi el Khemis, about 16 miles from the capital. It brings to nearly 300 the number of villagers killed since April 3 in the regions of Blida and Medea, south of Algiers, according to undial tolls. (AFP)

Death leap

Rome: A 13-year-old Italian girl suffering from the eating disorder anorexia killed herself by jumping off a balcony at her family's seventh-floor Milan flat because she thought she was too fat. She was 5ft 3in, and wanted to lose more weight. The girl, who was not named, landed in front of her father and brother and died instantly. (Reuters)

Police on skates

Amsterdam: Police hope to use roller skates to chase law-breakers. Starting this summer, a team of six officers on skates will patrol the city's pedestrian zones and narrow streets of the tourist district in a crackdown on pick-pockets and shoplifters. (Reuters)



Arturo Sandoval: invited to play for President Clinton

"I feel angry and insulted," said Mr Sandoval, who has lived in Miami since defecting while on tour in Rome in July 1990. "I've spent six and a half years paying taxes. I'm a professor at Florida International University and have reached the highest peaks an artist could hope for. This just isn't fair. It's ridiculous."

He says his problem stems from a question on the citizenship application form regarding

previous Communist Party membership. He answered "yes", because "I wanted to tell the truth". But immigration rules say applicants may not be granted US citizenship if they have been "a member of, or affiliated with, the Communist Party".

Mr Sandoval, who is appealing, says the Communist Party forced him to join his wife and son could join him on tour abroad.

French urge power handover in Zaire

BY SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

FRANCE, President Mobutu's last ally in the West, yesterday distanced itself from the ailing Zairean dictator and called for a transitional government.

The move should mark the start of national reconciliation. Jacques Rummelhardt, a French Foreign Ministry spokesman, said: His statement indicated that Paris has abandoned hopes that an international military intervention on humanitarian grounds could save Mr Mobutu.

The rebels, led by Laurent Kabila, yesterday claimed to be only three weeks away from taking the capital, and said they would soon open a western front to cut off Kinshasa from its Atlantic port of Matadi, a vital supply point for the city of five million people. The general in charge of Zaire's emergency Government said his men were preparing to defend the capital.

But General Likuila Balongo, who was appointed by President Mobutu two weeks ago, called on all residents to prepare to resist the rebels. "The army is prepared to defend Kinshasa. All dispositions have been taken. I can assure you that we have

assured sufficient arms to assure the security of the capital," he said on television.

The general urged civilians to look out for the slightest hint of trouble, and said suspects should be reported to the authorities because rebels could easily infiltrate Kinshasa from neighbouring Angola, Zambia and Congo.

The creation of a siege mentality was clearly aimed at returning Kinshasa to the days when it was ruled through a ruthless secret police and encouraged civilians to denounce those who expressed opposition to his dictatorship.

"We don't want war in Kinshasa, because if war comes here many people will suffer. And there is no way of escaping," said General Likuila.

His tough stance followed an announcement that President Mobutu would not attend talks with Mr Kabila in South Africa. Mr Mobutu's son said his father, who has prostate cancer, was still convalescing,

and that the four-hour flight to Pretoria or Cape Town would be too distressing. He said the President was still prepared to talk to Mr Kabila.

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WORK: the new way to escape family life



An American survey proves what many of us never dared admit — the office is where we take refuge from the stresses of home. Quentin Letts reports from New York

From Berkeley, California, that most sabbaticical of American university campuses, has come a dispiriting work of sociological research. It concludes that many Americans, particularly young mothers, are so unhappy with their lot, so beaten down by the late 20th century family demands, that they prefer to spend time at their workplaces rather than at home.

Not only did a third of surveyed fathers and a fifth of mothers describe themselves as "workaholics", 30 per cent said that they would like to spend longer hours in the office and more than 60 per cent said that they were perfectly satisfied with the already long shifts they put in (48.3-hour weeks on average for men, 41.7 hours for women). Despite all the clamour one hears in the media about the precociousness of time, very few parents said that they wanted shorter days at work.

The survey, conducted by the Berkeley sociology professor and author Arlie Hochschild, also found that work-scheme for young parents were almost unanimously ignored, as were programmes that offered child-rearing workers part-time employment. Fewer than 3 per cent of American workers in the Hochschild survey accepted their companies' "enlightened", "family-friendly" offers to work from home.

The overwhelming message that a startled Professor Hochschild and her research team received went something like this: spend more time at home? You must be joking!

The respondents' attitude was not, moreover, explained by fears of redundancy. People with sympathetic managers seemed more likely to want to stay at work than those under

tough bosses. Nor was overtime pay a factor. The better-off often appeared the more eager to linger at the office.

American employers are plainly doing something right.

If people are so content in their jobs, the workplace must have come a long way since the days of Dickensian hard labour.

The Berkeley sociologists praise such touchy-feely innovations as workplace powers,

which remind employees that they are "part of the corporate family", or company T-shirts that emphasise team-work.

Employees, even in these days of "downsizing", actually feel loved by their employers.

More pessimistically, however, the survey betrays a gloomy subsidence of home cheer across America.

For many working couples, apparently, the image of the home as a place of spiritual calm and physical warmth is a travesty.

Home life, you are a dunc.

It accutinates an already wearying competitiveness in America's life, quickens heart beats and reduces the amount of patience parents will show their young.

Home life becomes drawn into a whirlpool of material expectations and one-upmanship, combined with the insatiable calls made on adult time by a society which increasingly demands that they automate, maximise, and compartmentalise their days.

They must work, play and exercise,

must become parents and at the same time try to retain an image of youthfulness. In the

process people become so exhausted that they can no longer think.

Simplicity has gone. In a stunning example of how people follow the clichés of the media, of how individualism in America has surrendered to the herd instinct, one family visited by Professor Hochschild had a set amount of "quality time" or "QT" every night from 9 to 9.30pm. Similarly, they had the same set dinner "hour" (8 to 8.30pm) during which the telephone was religiously taken off the hook and the family members concentrated hard, as if they were chess players or Buddhists, on how to communicate. In the old days, people were allowed to muddle along, perhaps smoke a post-prandial pipe, or do some knitting, while the children thrashed around in the garden. Now we have "QT".

These are people whose minds have been addled by too much information, too many sociological inculcations from the liberal establishment and permitted too little real freedom. Professor Hochschild notes that in employment philosophy, the nearest equivalent to what is going on in the American home is "Taylorisation" — the principles of scientific management put forward by Frederick Taylor, who argued that the worker's mind and body must be coerced, rather than his heart nurtured. At the same time, ironically, Taylorisation has gone out of fashion in American workplaces, where people are now encouraged to feel an emotional bond with their work, to embrace quality. Is it any wonder that employees are likely to stay longer with their firm than they are, given divorce rates, with their spouse?

Home life becomes drawn into a whirlpool of material expectations and one-upmanship, combined with the insatiable calls made on adult time by a society which increasingly demands that they automate, maximise, and compartmentalise their days.

They must work, play and exercise,

must become parents and at the same time try to retain an image of youthfulness. In the

they were somewhat loyal. What else does all this tell us? That the dismantling of family traditions and the diminishing of child discipline has resulted in a deterioration of domestic happiness? Professor Hochschild quotes an economist who says young people today are more likely to "underperform at school, commit suicide, need psychiatric help, suffer a severe eating disorder, bear a child out of wedlock, take drugs and be the victim of a violent child".

Summed up, they appear to have done things better in the old days, when one parent stayed at home and children minded their P's and Q's.

Next year, instead of a take-

your-daughters-to-work day,

perhaps America's children ought to be encouraged to have a keep-your-parents-at-home day.

A temple to food, and no guilty aftertaste

There is a particular Alan Bennett character whose idea of a day out is a visit to a new carpark in some out-of-town shopping centre. I have not quite reached that stage, but last Friday I did make a pilgrimage to a new food shop, sited nowhere near where I live, to check it out.

The fact is, I went to visit the Joy of Real Food (pity about the cringe-making name) because I wanted in the first instance to breathe in the holy air of this latest temple to gastronomy, and in the second, to witness the extraordinary consolidation of the new eco-hedonism.

This shop — white walls, white light, glass

jars, marble shelves — is the beautiful manifestation, the confident, evolved incarnation of the born-again health store. It's the new baby of Kevin Gould, who, by opening the Realfood Store in Little Venice some years back, utterly changed the image (and the self-image) of the environmentally concerned, additive-conscious healthy eater.

Nigella Lawson

WHEN I lived in Florence with a schoolfriend of mine who was Catholic I used, from time to time, to accompany her to church. I loved watching everyone turning up for their *passeggiata*. Men and women would process up and down those wide, marble aisles showing off their newest clothes, their expensive key rings (to denote expensive cars) and, if at all possible, their ruffled, frilled and shiny-shod children. Throughout the service, conversations would be held, flirtations would be pursued, games of tag played.

To say this was tolerated by the priests would be to misrepresent the picture; it was expected. No longer, though, I read. A Florentine priest, Raimondo Sorgi, has issued an edict. No more mobile phones, no more mini-skirts, no more noise and, altogether, no more pushing and shoving.

Well, the Italians might be finding this troublesome, but I bet the Archbishop of Canterbury wishes he had their problems.

THE self-importance of the politician is extraordinary. After the utter mess — the traffic jams, the general confusion and blood-pressure rising inconvenience — caused by all the bomb scares on Monday, the party leaders have declared that the IRA won't achieve its aim of interrupting the election campaign.

If only they knew ... All blow to democracy should be condemned, but it's the disruption to our own everyday and ordinary life — the plodding job of getting to work and back — that we actually mind.

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Alan Coren



The piano was unfit to play, but now fitness is my forte

They came to take the piano on Friday. They brought it down the stairs from the landing where it had stood for 25 years, and it went bong as it hit every step, but not a bong any musician could have put his finger on, because it had been out of tune for 20 of those years, and if you put your finger on it, the note that came out belonged to it alone.

After they had got it down the stairs, they heaved it onto a little cart to wheel it up the garden path to their van, and I walked behind, though lacking an old cold-steel lintern, to see it off. It was a bit like a cortège. One or two neighbours watched — neighbours always watch a removal van — but they didn't say anything, because there is something about a piano leaving a house that begs discretion. Has the owner gone broke, has he gone deaf, are we watching divorce proceedings being distributed to the musical one?

It was none of these; it was simply that the piano was clapped-out. It had in truth never been very clapped-in: we had bought it for fifty quid in 1972 for the children to learn, but they learnt very little, except that you don't get much of a piano for fifty quid. It then stayed in the upstairs hall so that I could use it to tune my banjo, though as the piano was out of tune, the banjo was warped, and my ear is fin, I was never able to play anything that anybody could recognise, except parts of the slow movement of *Polly Wolly Doodle*. Musicologists among you may be surprised to learn that *Polly Wolly Doodle* has a slow movement, but that is only because you have not seen my fingering technique. I have to stop after each chord to have a cigarette and work out where to put my fingers for the next one. So a few days back, I asked a man round to tune the piano, and he said it wasn't worth tuning, let it go.

I came indoors again after they had driven away with my quarter of a century, feeling a bit glum because it seemed as though the piano had been delivered only about five minutes earlier, and I went up to look at the spot where the piano had stood, and there was this amazingly thick oblong of unrotted carpet with a lot of stuff on it which had, over the years, fallen off and behind the piano, snapshots, bits of Lego, marbles, Christmas cards, wizened toffees, an Action Man's head, three light-bulbs, an arrow, what might once have been the nevi that climbed out of Victoria's aquarium in, I think, 1980 — and a book.

The book was the fitness manual of the Royal Canadian Air Force. I had never seen it before. I do not know anyone who is fit, and I could come to no other conclusion than that Giles, at about 10, had decided either to escape piano lessons by running away to Toronto and becoming a fighter pilot, or to get himself fit enough to knock his piano teacher about. And then I opened the book. It was a revelation. It was the fitness book I had been looking for all my life. It said you did not have to go to gyms, jog for miles, buy exercise bikes or rowing machines or weights, you could get fit by answering the telephone or putting your hat on.

Thanks to isometrics, Isometrics was a muscle-stress technique whereby every physical action you took was done with total effort: you lifted a phone as if it weighed a ton, you put your hat on as if Arnold Schwarzenegger were trying to lift it off, with the result that you not only drove blood oxygenated to Bollinger effervescence throughout your body, you also transformed that body into a rippling powerhouse able to see off Canada's enemies without even getting into your plane.

Drawbacks? Social only. I was on the phone when my wife got home, and she was haggard with concern by the time I rang off (what's happened, your knuckles were white, your veins were standing out, you're covered in sweat) and when friends came for bridge on Sunday and I went out between rubbers to get drinks, I could hear their fraught mutters (is he all right, he closed that door as if 2 Para were trying to push it open, he's gripping his cards like a madman, his face went purple during that last contract), but you ignore such things if you're turning yourself into a titan. Any day now, I shall buy another piano, just so the neighbours can watch me carry it indoors.



A Europe of frustrations

All prime ministers learn that Britain can never reform its EU partners

A strange gleam has entered John Major's eye. His face muscles have softened and his jerky gestures have relaxed. All credit to Jacques Santer, the man he wisely chose to be president of the European Commission. On Monday, as the Prime Minister pondered his fate, an arm rose from the lake and in its hand was Excalibur, finest Luxembourg steel. Mr Santer knows how to repay a friend.

Mr Major had always planned a solo flourish at some point in the campaign. The question was when and on what terms. Last week he abandoned a press conference on education and did his "soapbox" act. He had worked in 1992 and again with his leadership challenge in 1995. He ranted on Europe and felt wonderful. To be free from the handlers, from the ashen wanks and the dark-suited ghouls of Central Office, to speak from the heart was to be himself. Honest John could attack his enemies without and within. Too bad if Kenneth Clarke was upset. Too bad if nothing quite made sense. Like Puck's spirit, Mr Major flew off "to hang a pearl in every ear's ear... lest hoary-headed frosts fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose".

The handlers came panting behind, clumsy playing the German card as they stumbled. Labour floundered, as it has throughout the election on any matter of substance. Then up popped Mr Santer to calm nerves. He told the Eurosceptics that they were demeaning Europe, "scoring cheap points by caricaturing our legislation and our institutions". It was Mr Major's first stroke of election luck. Mr Santer equalled Mr Blair. Vote Labour and Eurocrats would swarm over our hills. Our cows and — who knows what Central Office may say — our women. A German would put young Mr Blair on his knee. Mr Major has walked tall ever since.

But walked where? Europe is politically dead ground. Those who still like a tang of consistency added to their electoral cocktail may recall March 1991. Then a new administration was determined to turn over a new leaf in relations with Europe. "My aims for Britain in the Community can be simply stated. I want us to be where we belong — at the very heart of Europe working with our partners in building the future." Speaking in Bonn, Mr Major affirmed that the Tories' links to Germany's CDU were "closer I think than with any other party". London would say "yes, but" rather than "no". That is why every Prime Minister from Edward Heath through Wilson,

Maastricht was "a triumph". The resulting goodwill would put Britain in the forefront of reform. Farm subsidies, waste and corruption would end. All Europe would say, "thank you, Britain". Today, Mr Major is a changed man. He labours free votes and referendums. He is intransigent on beef and fish. He sabotages business on the Council of Ministers. He out-*Thatcherizes* Thatcher.

"I will veto if it is right for Britain," he said on Monday. "I will keep my feet on the brakes." If that meant isolation, so be it. "It is called British national interest."

Mr Blair would jeopardise all that.

There is of course an election on. Just

as Mr Major felt obliged to play the xenophobic card, so Mr Blair has felt obliged to follow suit. He ended a speech on Monday with a flurry of platitudes about patriotism vacuous even on Mr Blair's lips. Foreign affairs used to be a Tory strong point.

He was taking no chances. Politicians in office can get away with chicanery overseas, but at home they must defer to basic instincts. They must be tough on foreigners and tough on the causes of foreigners.

British politicians are never far from Europe. They are merely in or out of office. A good Tory is opposed to any extension of state power when in office; he views the state as an agent of benevolent central rule — as, indeed, himself. Likewise, in opposition, Europe is portrayed as a monument of corruption, a travesty of international cooperation, a cosmopolitan elite with an imperialist programme. Yet when the limousines start to scrunch and the chateau banquets start to clink, when the cameras whirr and the subsidies gush, Europe suddenly seems different. It becomes a soothing hostel for battered leaders. The rules may be tiresome and the fees outrageous, but the taxpayer pays and no British leader can ever face resigning.

That is why every Prime Minister from Edward Heath through Wilson,

Callaghan, Thatcher and now Major has refused a substantive veto of any extension of pan-European sovereignty.

The Single European and Maastricht treaties were signed. Today no British leader can bring himself openly to oppose what I believe to be the lunacy of a single European currency. Mr Major cannot, even if he feels it threatens the future stability of the Continent. Yesterday, Gordon Brown waffled on about needing to see the negotiating details, as if the argument over the currency was a secret known only to the cognoscenti. What has got into these people?

No British leader can take this country out of the framework of European co-operation represented by any government that has ceded in British peace-time history. In office I imagine Labour would be no better and no worse. It will rush to be at the heart of Europe. It will find it studded with cholesterol and will seek the double-bypass of the opt-out and the veto. It will then slump into the same cussedness that Mr Major abjured and subsequently found he had no alternative but to adopt.

Though I am wholly opposed to further steps towards European union, I do not regard what the Tories call Labour's "five surrenders" as substantive.

Mr Blair claims that his concessions on the social chapter would produce sufficient goodwill to enable him to win ground on BSE, agricultural reform and waste. Mr Major thought that in 1991. He is a wiser man now. Mr Blair cannot be so thick. Nor is he likely to sign the social chapter to appease his Left, since such a concession to Brussels would be seen as far weaker than any concession at home. Mr Blair may talk big about not being marginalised in Europe. He will be marginalised. He is British. He must pursue the policy of his forebears.

Yet this election has yielded one

novelty, the certainty of a referendum.

Five years ago, any thought of referring these periodic treaties to public opinion was rejected by politicians of all parties.

Referendums were unconstitutional and detracted from the greatest sovereignty of all: that of an elected British government to do anything it likes between elections. Public pressure has revised that line in the constitution. I find this exciting. Open the referendum box and who knows what delights may pop out?

With some help from Mr Santer, Brit-

ain is about to see a period of sus-

tained resistance to any advance in pan-European statism, whoever is in power.

The reformation against the unholly Brussels empire is beginning.

The theses are nailed to the door. There

is no counter-reformation in sight.

Whatever Mr Major says, Mr Blair is no

Ignatius Loyola.

for leaders. But then cussedness has been the default mode of Britain's European diplomacy since the Hundred Years War.

The Tories wish to assert that Mr Blair cannot be trusted in Europe. That is unfair. The Tories have signed two treaties ceding more power over domestic policy to European institutions than any government had ceded in British peacetime history. In office I imagine Labour would be no better and no worse. It will rush to be at the heart of Europe. It will find it studded with cholesterol and will seek the double-bypass of the opt-out and the veto. It will then slump into the same cussedness that Mr Major abjured and subsequently found he had no alternative but to adopt.

Though I am wholly opposed to further steps towards European union, I do not regard what the Tories call Labour's "five surrenders" as substantive.

Mr Blair claims that his concessions on the social chapter would produce sufficient goodwill to enable him to win ground on BSE, agricultural reform and waste.

Mr Major thought that in 1991. He is a wiser man now.

Mr Blair cannot be so thick. Nor is he likely to sign the social chapter to appease his Left, since such a concession to Brussels would be seen as far weaker than any concession at home. Mr Blair may talk big about not being marginalised in Europe. He will be marginalised. He is British. He must pursue the policy of his forebears.

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novelty, the certainty of a referendum.

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Defence: silence is sinister

Iain Duncan

Smith on the threat that Labour denies

The one subject that has been scrupulously avoided during the election campaign by the media is that of defence. The justification advanced for this is that since the end of the Cold War, defence is not an issue because there is no threat. This is extremely complacent and ill-informed, though it serves the purposes of the Labour Party.

Just a few days ago, Israel's General Eltan Ben Eliyahu revealed that Iran has been testing missiles with ranges of up to 1,500 km, which would threaten Israel and most of the key targets in the Middle East, so increasing tension in an already politically combustible zone. Yet this should be no surprise. Analysis such as Jane's have been warning the West of such an eventuality. It all began with Iran's offer of finance to North Korea's missile programme in the mid 1980s, which gave it the option to purchase modified Scud B missiles, which were then being developed. Coupled with Iran's spending of an average of \$500 million a year on purchasing strategic technology, including nuclear components, this makes the threat very serious. Yet Iran is not alone. By 2005, Libya will have in its possession missiles capable of targeting London, Syria, Iraq and others are engaged in similar programmes.

Western intelligence finds it almost impossible to confirm who has nuclear warheads and delivery systems until the last moment. For example, in the late 1980s the Saudi Government bought missiles from China which the West discovered only when they were unloaded at the docks. The proliferation chain has so many links that covering them all has become impossible.

But it is not just nuclear capability or the ability to launch that matters. Chemical and biological weapons are also spreading alarmingly. The Americans are so worried that they have set up a federal quick-response force, whose task is to deal with terrorist threats to their main cities. They understand that what happened on the Tokyo underground could happen in America. It doesn't take much to deliver chemical or biological agents that can wreak havoc with the civil population. Furthermore, Russia has continued to work on chemical weapons, particularly in developing weapons which do not use the banned precursor chemicals. New information indicates that the Russians have developed three completely new nerve agents. They have also been developing a new form of anthrax that is totally resistant to all known antibiotics. Although Presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin both promised to stop the programmes now, they failed to do so. Even if Mr Yeltsin were to stop the programmes now, the technology is easily transferable to other countries such as China.

There is no question that a threat exists to key British interests around the world, not just in the Middle East but in the Indian subcontinent and even in the Far East. Over the next five to eight years, proliferation will develop into a direct threat to Britain and her allies in the West. Yet this issue isn't even raised in the general election.

Although Tony Blair has said that he wants stability in defence, the first thing he plans to do is to create instability through a wide-ranging review as soon as he gets into power. This review, says Labour's Shadow Defence Secretary, David Clark, would have "painful consequences". There is little substantial commitment to defence or even understanding of the nature of the threat. Instead, what is becoming clearer by the day is that Labour plans to reduce expenditure on defence by at least £5 billion to help to cover the gap between its spending pledges and money at present available. The Labour Party is full of people who believe that the British Armed Forces should be reduced to a small paramilitary force capable of intervening in circumstances such as those in Bosnia, but not capable of fighting a full-scale war. Not one commitment, other than a vague one to the Eurofighter, exists when it comes to equipment programmes. Nor does Mr Blair or any of his spokesmen referred to the serious nuclear, chemical and biological threat that is growing around the world.

China clearly intends to replace Russia as the world's second superpower. Within the next five years, it will have a more formidable ocean-going fleet than the Royal Navy, a fleet that could pose a serious threat to Taiwan and to other Western interests. Yet how we address this has not been properly debated. Eight years ago, 70 per cent of Nato could mobilise in 12 hours; now only 2 per cent could do so, and with a much reduced capability. Most of Europe's commitments to Nato are "hollow" units, which exist in name only. Labour has stated time and again that it admires this European approach to defence. Many Labour MPs want a reduction in British defence spending to the European average, which would result in massive further cuts.

It is time for a proper debate on this crucial subject. For if the prime concern of any British government is the defence of the realm, such silence does the public a serious disservice. Either we face up to the threat or we shall find ourselves sleepwalking into a crisis. The public should be allowed to decide now which party cares most for their security, for it will be too late in five years to say sorry.

Iain Duncan Smith is the Conservative candidate for Chingford and Woodford Green.

Chloe's friends

MADONNA has thrown away her conical bras in favour of Britain's latest fashion export. On Friday night she threw a surprise party in London for Stella McCartney, the new fashion designer to the house of Chloe.

During a "brief and private" visit to London, the singer-cum-actress helped to organise the secret celebration. The pair have enjoyed a close relationship over several years, and friends suggest that

Madonna will soon be a loyal client at Chloe.

By way of a venue, Madonna opted for Mo Mo, a North African restaurant in Piccadilly which is barely open. A member of her office telephoned on Thursday and said that Madonna wanted to give a party here for Stella the following night," says an employee.

We told them that the walls were still stuck together with Sellotape, but nothing would put them off."

DIARY

More than a hundred guests came for the champagne and Moroccan hors d'oeuvres, including Naomi Campbell, Simon and Yasmin Le Bon, Jimmy Nail and Rifat Ozek. To ensure supplies, Madonna's office warned beforehand that she would be drinking Seabrezzies, a cocktail of vodka, cranberry and grapefruit juice. In the event, however, she confined herself to hot toddies — it was a cold night.

Inter alia

SO CONCERNED is Lynda La Plante, the creator of *Prime Suspect*, by material on the Internet that she has written a four-hour TV serial for Channel 4 warning of the evils of the World Wide Web. In *Killer Net*, which will start filming in July, a serial murderer will

use the information superhighway to conceal his identity.

"The Net is out of control. There's no way to regulate it, and it can only get worse," she told me at a Channel 4 lunch yesterday for writers such as Alan Bleasdale, Fay Weldon and Paula Milne. "I love using it to research scripts, but I was very disturbed by what I saw while working on *Killer Net*."

● Today marks the opening of the building pictured here. It is not some commuter development, but the Shakespeare Country Park in Miyama, Japan. Its purpose is to inspire the Japanese to stay in Japan for their holidays rather than

to pour their money into Stratford-upon-Avon.

Spearheaded

ONCE the exclusive preserve of Chilton Foliat, a pretty Oxfordshire village and home of Paddy, a labrador belonging to Max Hastings, the Editor of London's *Evening Standard*. A local cocker spaniel recently gave birth to five puppies. They were half-labrador and, like Paddy, had a distinctive white mark on their bellies.

Soon the talk over the garden fences was of one thing: on quiet afternoons around the village Paddy and the spaniel had been spied in familiar poses. Neither Hastings nor the spaniel's owner, however, was willing to take the findings on, and



THE CHINA HAND

Yeltsin welcomes an old adversary to new ties

At the height of Soviet paranoia about its enemies, Brezhnev used to accuse the Americans of "playing the China card". At the end of the 70s Moscow believed that it was encircled by countries which had formed a tactical alliance to destroy the Soviet Union. Yesterday the pattern appeared reversed. It was the Russians who brandished a fist full of Chinese cards. President Yeltsin and his Government welcomed President Jiang Zemin to Moscow with all the warmth and ceremonial of a visit Moscow believes will set a new course in Sino-Russian relations for years to come.

Both countries have political and economic interests in closer ties. Trade is flourishing, and the long Sino-Russian border is increasingly porous. Chinese traders and consumer products have penetrated deep into Siberia; Russian industrial exports have found a market adapted their unsophisticated level of technology; and both countries are happy with the huge flow of Russian arms exports. Russia sees the Chinese market as a saviour for its vital arms industry. And China has an important alternative source of supply after the Western embargo that followed Tiananmen Square.

More important than the revival of economic ties is the political rapprochement between Asia's two biggest countries. Paradoxically, this is all the easier since the collapse of communism in Russia. Both countries are now able to conduct their relations on the basis of national interest, rather than being snared in doctrinal argument over the leadership of the world communist movement. For both Beijing and Moscow there are three overwhelming factors that now bring them closer together.

The first is mutual security and the settlement of the long border dispute. The quarrels over disputed islands in the Ussuri river provoked border skirmishes that

almost flared up into full-scale war in the 1970s. Russia has vast troop and missile concentrations throughout the sparsely populated region which it can now barely afford; China has long resented what it sees as a legacy of unequal treaties it was forced to negotiate with Tsarist and then communist Russia. An agreement by both sides to pull back their forces is almost complete.

The second factor is the fear in both Moscow and Beijing of resurgent Islam on their borders. Russia has long worried about Islamic fundamentalism. The Chinese have seen armed rebellion in Xinjiang, where Muslim separatists are conducting a war against the Han state that is causing grave concern to the communist leadership. A crucial aspect of Mr Jiang's visit is the inclusion, in still secret protocols, of Kazakhstan and other Central Asian former Soviet republics in the agreements on armed forces. Both Moscow and Beijing must be confident that these countries have agreed, in details of these accords, not to allow Islamic activists to use them as a basis for regional destabilisation.

The third and most important factor is the resentment in both capitals of American power. Moscow, especially, is still bitter at the proposed enlargement of Nato, which it sees as threatening to its own security. Kremlin advisers are now urging Mr Yeltsin to concentrate on Russia's Asian destiny and "play the China card" in retaliation. For its part, China is watching with concern Washington's increasingly tough stance on human rights, political freedoms and Hong Kong. An agreement to support each other, especially in the UN Security Council, would make it harder for America to act as the world's only global superpower. Warmer relations between Moscow and Beijing must boost self-confidence in each country. The West will watch the outcome warily.

PADDY'S PARADOX

The looming prospect of more seats but less influence

Paddy Ashdown has had a better general election than most. From a low base, the Liberal Democrats have built up support during the campaign. The "Blair effect" does not seem to have damaged their core support. The shift away from the details of constitutional reform to the basic issues of education and health has paid dividends.

However, previous contests have seen Liberal surges fade away on polling day when voters decide between the two main parties. The lot of the Liberal Democrats in a predominantly two-party system is hardly a happy one. Policies must be found that are distinctive and attract publicity. Ideally, such suggestions should appeal to a broader national interest than the partisan proposals of the Conservative and Labour camps.

Liberal Democrat proposals also need a direct relevance to crucial sections of the electorate. An increase in taxation to fund services, sought by most citizens and staffed by the public sector middle class, has met all these objectives. Mr Ashdown has appeared radical and responsible. His delicate coalition between the Celtic fringe and the common room should continue to hold together.

Despite that, it is unlikely that the party will exceed the 1% per cent share of the national vote that it achieved five years ago. The compensation for Mr Ashdown is that a disciplined concentration on the three dozen constituencies where Liberal prospects seem strongest should work in his favour. It would certainly be no surprise if the Liberal Democrats held more seats in the next Parliament despite a smaller percentage of votes nationwide.

Effective deployment of scarce resources

NEW CO-OP

The CWS needs rebirth not preservation

The Co-operative Movement was born of worthy ideals and sound business sense – 150 years ago. The market in which it now operates could barely have been imagined by the Rochdale Pioneers; their legacy looks as out of place in it as they would.

Yet there are some who would grant the Co-op National Heritage status. A mooted £1.2 billion bid for part of the organisation has been greeted as near sacrifice, with Labour politicians predictably racing to sign motions against the prospect. Little, however, has been heard from the deserving poor for whom the Co-op pioneers simply wanted to provide cheap food.

Today those customers are being well catered for by some of the most sophisticated retailers in the world. The shelves that stock exotic fruits are but an aisle away from those that offer bargain price baked beans. Their motivation may be different, but the highly commercial supermarket giants have taken up the Co-op's original aim and improved upon the execution. With their loyalty cards and array of bonus schemes, the chains have even usurped the "divi" which the Co-op is belatedly resurrecting.

The Co-op's arcane structure has helped preserve it from the realities of the commercial world which normally ensure that those who underperform are swept away. The Co-operative Wholesale Society, operator of 1,000 shops, a bank, an insurance company and other scattered interests, has a voting structure to confuse any psephologist. This minimises the rights of the real owners.

Andrew Regan spotted that the thousands of individual members of the CWS own the

business every bit as much as the policy holders who this week have been cashing in on their ownership of the Alliance & Leicester Building Society. His plan is to pay them for their under-utilised assets and then set about making the most of them.

There is no denying that a hefty element of what used to be stigmatised as asset-stripping is crucial to Regan's sums. But this is no longer perceived as the evil that it once was: in the world after privatisation, sensibilities are attuned to the need for efficiencies and profits. The majority of Co-op members would grab enthusiastically if Regan were to dangle cash in their direction.

But the myriad of boards that must be negotiated before any bidder can reach the ultimate owners of the CWS means that only the most determined and ingenious predator stands a chance of unlocking the potential profits in the Co-op. Andrew Regan does not look the part. It is not merely his characterisation as a young, thrusting whizzkid which operates against him. His tactics have been sufficiently lacking in subtlety to give the Co-op top brass the ammunition with which to keep him at bay and preserve their own comfortable and well paid jobs.

Regan has, however, highlighted the value that lies latent in the Co-op. Others will now be keen to unlock it. They should be encouraged to do so. The Co-op was once mighty, including proud titles such as the Royal Arsenal Co-op in Woolwich. The Royal Arsenal itself is now deserted. The council is seeking lottery money to turn it into a heritage site. The Co-op cannot be saved in the same way.

Andrew Regan spotted that the thousands of individual members of the CWS own the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Fuelling the debate on Britain's future role in Europe

From Air Commodore Alastair Mackie

Sir, Jacques Santer (report, April 22) minced his words. He could have done a befuddled electorate a service with a blunter account of the damage that politicians' deceptions are doing to Britain's prospects.

Our would-be representatives at the Amsterdam conference vie with each other in assuring us of the doughy fight for Britain they would put up. Thereby they conveniently ignore the fact that there is little left to fight for: most British economic, military and diplomatic sovereignty has long gone.

So — as each party has made a point of not telling us — has much of our power to influence decision-making, now customary in European conclaves, been seen in that Worse still is the disingenuous fostering of the illusion that a referendum on the tortuous issues of EU and EMU could properly determine Britain's way forward.

So much Santer could have told us. He could also have fitted out our negotiators with the decent clothing for the conference table of one unassailable truth — that Britain goes fully into Europe or to the wall.

Yours faithfully,
A. MACKIE,
4 Warwick Drive, SW15.
April 22.

From Lord Pearson of Rannoch and Lord Stoddart of Swindon

Sir, When they pretend that our national wellbeing depends upon our remaining enslaved by the Treaty of Rome, Mr Hattersley, Lord Howe and Sir David Steel (letter, April 19) clearly show how the European cause has been reduced to empty slogans.

The 9 per cent of our economic activity which takes place with "Europe" would not suffer if we left the European Union because, like Norway and Switzerland, we could negotiate favourable access to its single market. We trade in deficit with our European "partners", who therefore have more jobs at stake on their trade with us than we do on our trade with them.

Foreign businessmen, Germans included, invest in the UK because we have low industrial on-costs, low tax and low inflation; because we have good labour relations with a skilled workforce; because we speak English; has obvious virtues. But it also involves an implicit admission of failure as a national political force. Many parts of Britain will see their lowest Liberal vote since 1970. The Liberal Democrats have abandoned their previous position of "equi-distance" between the two larger organisations. As a result they have found themselves to the left of Labour on many matters. That might be convenient in the short term. But it largely precludes cooperation with any other party except Labour in the future. That inflexibility will have its costs and limitations.

More seats will not mean increased influence if Labour wins its promised outright majority. In truth, the perfect result for Paddy Ashdown's party would be another Conservative victory. That would open the possibility of a full-scale realignment of the centre-left and a Lab-Lib alliance. The next best option would be a hung Parliament; although here Mr Ashdown has all but pre-committed himself to a deal with Tony Blair. That would provide a taste of power but plenty of pitfalls as part of the bargain. The worst of all worlds would be a Labour landslide. A realignment of any form would be deferred for at least a decade. Mr Blair's already tepid enthusiasm for electoral reform would diminish even further.

All this provides Paddy Ashdown with a paradox. In parliamentary representation he might become the most successful Liberal leader since David Lloyd George. Yet his long march to political relevance could be permanently halted. His party would once again resemble a collection of pressure groups and local councillors rather than a real rival to Labour.

From Mr David Ford

Sir, I understand that the bulk of your coverage must feature on "the three main parties" and compare their policies and ideas. However a sizeable proportion of the public is not intending to vote for the big battalions, and are looking elsewhere for a party to vote for. These voters are not being served by the media.

I accept that the Green Party will not form the next Government, but it is a serious political party with a thorough analysis of all areas of policy and a credible, costed programme of government. It has a sizeable number of councillors across the country and has a long track-record fighting all sorts of elections.

I submit that all this deserves more analysis.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID FORD
(Green Party Election Agent,
Yorkshire Area),
25 Marlborough Road,
Shipley, West Yorkshire.
April 15.

From Mr Robert A. Hurst

Sir, I worked closely with Tony Blair on several commercial cases in the early Eighties. My recollection of him as a young barrister is that of a non-nonsense advocate and negotiator with a keen eye for detail.

Unless he has changed dramatically over the past 14 years, I am unable to recognise him as the ventriloquist's dummy sitting on Chancellor Kohl's knee.

Yours faithfully,
R. A. HURST (solicitor),
73 Southwark, NW11.
April 20.

and because Britain is a wonderful place to live in. They will not continue to do so if we are dragged much further into the sinking, corporatist, sieve economy that is "Europe".

It is a great credit to the British people that 40 per cent of them now wish to withdraw from "Europe" altogether, despite seeing so consistently misled by all their political leaders for many years. And surely it is our seat on the Security Council and our membership of Nato which ensure that we remain a global power, rather than our position as an outvoted voice in an outdated failure?

Yours faithfully,
PEARSON OF RANNOCH
(Conservative),
STODDART OF SWINDON
(Labour),
(Joint Chairmen, House of Lords
Maastricht Study Group),
House of Lords.
April 21.

From Mr Edward McMillan-Scott, MEP for North Yorkshire (European People's Party Parliamentary Group (Conservative))

Sir, Tony Blair is not a Christian Democrat, as Daniel Johnson suggests ("Is Tony Blair our answer to Helmut Kohl?", April 19). Christian Democracy is a continental centre-right movement which promotes "personalism" against the collectivism of the socialists. In Germany it embraces the right-wing CSU who, like the British Conservatives in the European Parliament, are associate members of its parliamentary group.

The secretary-general of the CD-based European People's Party, Klaus Welle, recently urged an approach to secular parties such as the Gaullists

"to develop an effective common counter-balance to the socialists in Europe". In economic policy, CDs are close to British Conservatism and getting closer, under the pressures of global competition and the EMU convergence criteria.

Tony Blair and Helmut Kohl may agree about European integration and making Britain less competitive through the trade-union inspired Social Chapter, but little else. Blair is a collectivist.

Yours faithfully,
EDWARD Mc MILLAN-SCOTT,
European Parliament,
97 rue Belliard, Brussels 1040.
April 20.

From Mr Lewis Benjamin

Sir, Surely the unsung hero — well, nearly unsung — of the 200 Tory "rebels" anxious to keep their seats (letter, April 21) should be James Goldsmith. If it wasn't for his campaign I doubt the question of Europe would have broken surface.

Sincerely,
LEWIS BENJAMIN,
17 Brown Court, Westfields,
Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire.
April 21.

From the Reverend Richard Dormandy

Sir, The Registrar of Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese (letter, April 19) quoted only part of the canon clause on infant baptism. Although a minister may not refuse baptism, canon B22 does explicitly allow delay "for the purpose of preparing or instructing the parents or guardians or godparents".

Given that we now live in a post-Christian society, it is not at all unreasonable that part of such preparation and instruction should include attendance at Christian worship.

Moreover, the canon also enjoins the minister to "instruct the parents that the same responsibilities rest on them as are required by the godparents". Since canon B23 requires godparents themselves to be baptised and confirmed, it is not unreasonable to expect parents to show a similar degree of Christian commitment if they are to discharge their Christian parental duties properly.

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD DORMANDY,
Holy Trinity Vicarage,
1 Sydenham Park Road, SE26.

From the Reverend Douglas Cockbill

Sir, Throughout most of its history, the Church of England has practised a baptismal policy that can only be called flabby. The Church has seen its

numbers decline since the turn of this century while distributing baptism just about as loosely as it possibly can.

Despite the Archbishop of Canterbury's example (report, April 14) the fact is that this open policy has failed. Jesus warmly welcomed everyone who came to Him, but He also issued challenges and taught them. Many people are grateful that they are challenged and required to worship God for a few months before a baptism is undertaken. Some become active and devout Christians as a result.

Moreover, the canon also enjoins the minister to "instruct the parents that the same responsibilities rest on them as are required by the godparents". Since canon B23 requires godparents themselves to be baptised and confirmed, it is not unreasonable to expect parents to show a similar degree of Christian commitment if they are to discharge their Christian parental duties properly.

For me, however, the pleasure will have been mixed with gratitude for the "second chance" of higher education afforded by this great institution, with its universally recognised standards of excellence.

When I left my elementary school 33 years ago to start work at the age of 14, the BA honours degree I have just received was unimaginable. At my degree ceremony today my thoughts turned to the late Harold Wilson whose inspired vision brought the Open University into being. Though never of his political persuasion, I bless his memory for the pleasure, pride and satisfaction his initiative has given to so many, including Sir,

Yours truly,
G. HANSON,
Potter's Lodge, 74a Slough Road,
Iver Heath, Buckinghamshire.
April 19.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

Archaeology stuck 'in the doldrums'

From Mr Tim Tatton-Brown

Sir, The refusal of English Heritage to allow any further archaeological investigations on the site of the Globe Theatre in London (Professor Andrew Gurr's letter, April 16; see also letter, March 22) is only the tip of the iceberg. For the last decade or so, virtually no new purely research excavations have been started in England. Instead millions of pounds have been spent on excavations of redevelopment sites which have produced very little. Collating these morsels has become the order of the day, thanks to the policies of English Heritage.

Almost all funding for archaeological excavation in Britain is now in the doldrums. Twenty or thirty years ago major research projects like Barry Cunliffe's at Fishbourne Palace or Dunbury Iron Age hill fort, or Martin Biddle's Winchester excavations, were setting new excavation standards and revolutionising our knowledge of Iron Age, Roman and Medieval archaeology. Where are the equivalent projects today?

With the advent of lottery funding, English Heritage should stop its policy of "mindless burial", as Professor Gurr correctly calls it, and encourage the setting up of new long-term research excavations on key sites like the *Globe Theatre*.

Yours faithfully,
TIM TATTON-BROWN,
Fisherton Mill House,
Mill Road, Salisbury,
Wiltshire.
April 21.

St Helena's discontents

From Mr Roland Brown and Mr Philip Daniel

Sir, As co-authors of a recent independent report for Overseas Development Administration on the legislative environment for foreign investment in St Helena we wish to comment on the letters from the Director of the St Helena Institute and Minister of State, Sir Nicholas Bonson (April 18, 19), both of which touch on the important issue of inward investment.

As we pointed out in our report, the establishment of a more hospitable climate for inward investment requires radical changes in the existing regime relating to immigration (work permits) and the grant of land rights.

Unfortunately so long as the St Helenians continue to be denied the right to live and, more importantly, to work in this country, the required changes are unlikely to be acceptable to the local community. Cut off, for the most part, from opportunities for employment in the rest of the world, it is not perhaps surprising that the islanders are reluctant to share their meagre patrimony with outsiders.

Restoration of the right of abode and the adoption of measures to attract inward investment are not therefore alternative policies for St Helena. They go together, and one is almost certainly a precondition for the success of the other.

Yours faithfully,
ROLAND BROWN,<

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A town rises from the pits

Housing for 13,000 people is being created on an old brickworks in the Fens. Eve-Ann Prentice reports on the biggest project of its kind in Europe today

A bleak wasteland of mud on the edge of the Fens is one place that made Ken Livingstone see red. It is also the setting which thousands of people will call home soon after the millennium.

Devastated, water-filled trenches stretching towards the horizon like a battlefield from the First World War greeted planners when they set about building the biggest new-town development of its kind in Europe today.

The £1.00 million township of Hampton, near Peterborough, will provide homes for 13,000 people, industrial and commercial developments employing 12,000 people, schools, and shops – possibly including the largest Tesco in the country. It will be created on thousands of acres of land devastated – paradoxically – by the brick-making industry. The ground which will become Hampton was pillaged by brickworks for nearly a century.

Plans for Hampton township were mooted in 1987 and planning permission was granted in March, 1993. Now the land has been cleared, the first green shoots are masking the clay, and a few pioneer trees and shrubs stand alone on the verge of a new dual carriageway. The first of the township's 5,200 new homes are to be built later this year, with a show house ready for viewing in July or August.

Hampton is also to be the site of the world's largest nature reserve dedicated to the great crested newt – which is where Ken Livingstone comes in. The Labour MP, former leader of the now-defunct Greater London Council and newt-lover extraordinaire, learnt that Hanson Land, the township developers, were moving the newts which had colonised part of the old clay

pits to a slightly different location. "He was furious because he thought we were uprooting them and moving them miles away," says James Hopkins, managing director of Hanson Land. "Then we invited him down; when he saw what we were doing, he said it was a wonderful scheme."

Mr Livingstone is slightly less euphoric. "They are making an effort, but not enough of an effort," he says. "I was over the moon when they showed me this barren landscape where they said the newts had been and then showed me where they said they were being moved to. The trouble is that the site they show you is not the main newt colony."

Mr Livingstone's interest in newt welfare was sparked when he caught one as a boy of 12. "It just grew from there," he says. "Now people call me from all over the country, I am going to be the minister of

news in the new Labour government."

Up to 30,000 legally protected great crested newts, believed to be the largest colony in Europe, are to be accommodated in the reserve being created next to the township and to be managed by a trust funded by Hanson Land.

Hanson Land is hoping to avoid some of the isolationism and bleakness which plagued some earlier new towns by providing a range of community facilities, including four primary schools and one secondary school, floodlit tennis pitches and all-weather playing fields, four social centres, a library, day centres for the old and young, a police station, a cemetery and churches.

Hampton will comprise four areas – light industry, shopping, leisure and housing. Hampton Hargate, where the houses are to be built, will have a range of homes from

single-bedroom flats to four-bedroom lakeside detached houses in five distinct areas.

"Traffic-calming" measures will be built in. McLean Homes will shortly begin building the first clutch of 60 houses, the first of which is expected to be occupied by the end of the year.

Though the land has been



These fields in East Anglia have a sylvan beauty about them, but will become part of a township, including commercial areas such as those shown above



devastated, the Government does not classify it as a brownfield site – one formerly of urban use.

"There has been public perception that a lot of developers are raping and pillaging the countryside, that they are in

and out very fast and don't care," says Mr Hopkins. "We have planned this as an entire

community. We knew we would be here tomorrow as well as today. We are not just here for the ride."

Who will live in the new town, and will the first to move in feel cut off and isolated?

"We have all the psychological hurdles to overcome, newtown blues and no buses, although we are going to

provide a bus service into Peterborough town centre for a while." An additional problem is that local people know that when the site was used for the brickworks, it was laid waste, so they do not think of the area as a natural one.

Of the 5,200 homes to be built at Hampton, 15 per cent

will go to low-income groups

and 15 per cent will be sold below market price. "I live in Hertfordshire; would I live in this new town? Yes I would," says Mr Hopkins. "Nowhere will be more than 400 yards from the shops and, while we are not a social service, we want to look after people."

• Further details: Hanson Land, 01733 888000

THE COMMISSION FOR NEW TOWNS IS BEING WOUND DOWN EVEN THOUGH EXPERTS SAY IT STILL HAS A ROLE TO PLAY

Why not build on new town success?

generation. David Curry, said the commission could continue for a further five years after that but its role would be reduced to selling off the 10,000 acres of land held in the new towns and dealing with the assets left by the winding up of urban development corporations and housing action trusts.

Mr Curry says: "The reformed body will be a small organisation with clearly defined targets and a limited life."

Next March the commission will move out of its London office. Meanwhile, it is drip-feeding the remaining 5,500 acres of residential land it holds to developers at Milton Keynes, Northampton, and the largest green field project of all, Milton Keynes. The New Towns Commission was created in 1961 to

Crawley, rather than flood the market. It also sells a range of self-build plots. All this is giving the Treasury a healthy return.

The English New Town programme was one of the most successful urban policies of post-war Britain. After the New Towns Act of 1946, 11 new towns were designated. In the early 1960s the Act was reinvoked to help cope with a rising population that was expected to increase by 18 million by the year 2000. A further nine new towns were designated, including the expansion of Peterborough, Northampton and Warrington and the largest green field project of all, Milton Keynes. The New Towns Commission was created in 1961 to

manage all this development, much of which has been done on a public/private sector partnership.

Altogether, the new towns have accommodated more than two million people and provided one million jobs.

The commission's chief executive, John Walker, says: "Our job is anchored in the existing new towns and, therefore, it's bound to tail off because once the land is sold off, it comes to an end. The Secretary of State for the Environment, John Gummer, has launched a debate about where people should live. The way in which new towns have developed has a lot to say for it. We will help to inform the debate by pointing out some of the

opportunities and successes of new town development. We'll respond to the Green Paper to try to show what the new towns can do to achieve balanced sustainable development."

It is for government to decide if

the commission should have any formal role, but, he added, large-scale mixed developments needed to be managed on a sound and sustainable basis.

Mr Humber is sure the commission could perform a positive role as a range of major new towns could come back onto the agenda.

"To start afresh it would need to start acquiring agricultural land and all over again and pay compensation at a multiple of agricultural value."

CHRISTINE WEBB

RETIREMENT HOMES

English Courtyard have a limited number of luxury retirement houses & flats with 2 or 3 bedrooms available at:

Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire - Puddington, Dorset

Prices from £98,500 to £170,000

Telephone 0880 220855 quoting ref RPT

1 Holme Street, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 4LT

English Courtyard

HAMPSHIRE

REAGENTS recently converted country residence and guest house. Tel 01428 220000. Overline Ltd 01428 512999.

CHERITON

Village location, 6 miles E. Winchester / M3, on the edge of the downland. 3 bed, 2 bath, 3 rec'd, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 01428 220000. Overline Ltd 01428 512999.

KENT

WALTHAM: No. 1 Canterbury, Sevenoaks, detached, 3 bedrooms, 3 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 01732 350000. Overline Ltd 01732 350000.

NEAR SEVENOAKS

Idyllic country-side location for 2 bed semi-detached, 2 reception, conservatory, Inglenook fireplace, plus 2 acres, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 01732 350000. Overline Ltd 01732 350000.

SUFFOLK

LOWESTOFT, CORTON

Very popular demand, 5 beds, modern kitchen, 2 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 01720 250000. Overline Ltd 01720 250000.

SURREY

REIGATE

VILLAGE LOCATION A 4 bed detached bungalow. 3 rec'd, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 01883 535168 (5.30 to 8.30)

MORTGAGES

LONDON RENTALS

HARIES SW13

Stately Victorian family home. Convenient for Hammonds Broadway, 4/5 bedrooms, 3 reception rooms, large kitchen/breakfast room, 2 shower rooms, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

COVENT GARDEN

A nicely restored character property. 2/3 bedrooms, 2 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

LONDON RENTALS

BUTLER WHARF SE1

Stylish penthouse apartment. 2 bedrooms, 2 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

GOLDERS GREEN NW10

Spacious 2 bed, 2 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

HAMPSHIRE

CENTRAL

Excellent 2 bed, 2 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

HARROW

2 miles, 3rd floor (MV), 1 bed, 1 rec'd, 1 bath, 1 shower, 1 garage, 1000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

CHISWICK

Family friendly, spacious, large garden, 2nd floor, 2 bed, 2 rec'd, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

HORNSEY

Excellent 2 bed, 2 reception, 2 bath, 2 shower, 2 garage, 2000 sq ft. Tel 0171 562 5901.

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Those in battle buses can take a few knocks

True or false? "The purpose of advertising is to make people buy things they don't want." Much of the Great British Public believes this proposition to be true. On Radio 4's *Moral Maze* recently, the amusing adman who defended his craft was treated as the devil himself.

The outrage that greeted last week's Tory poster of tiny Tony on giant Helmut's knee blazed from these banked fires of righteousness. Even though many television commercials are highly popular, even though we all depend on advertisements for information on everything from detergent to computers, advertising ranks even lower on the moral scale than the media. Michael Leapman writes in this week's *New Statesman* that, with the exception of *The Guardian*, the media sections in the national broadsheet papers are "no more than extensions of their endless celebrity coverage, padded out with gibberish about advertising". (Thanks, Michael).

This condescension springs in part from the non-commercialism of the BBC. After all, what broadcasting service except one that did not give a damn about delivering an audience to advertisers would dare to bore us to death with endless election "coverage"? Besides, thanks to the BBC's long monopoly on radio, commercials on that medium remain an underdeveloped art. Earlier this month, the Radio Advertising Bureau held a seminar to raise creative standards. But it will take some creativity to overcome the innate handicaps — the need to rattle off telephone numbers and the irritation of repeated jokes.

The national distrust of advertising has less honourable roots. There persists a disdain for "trade", along with a belief in the gullibility of the masses. Push any product on the wretches and they will buy it. Thus, there are no fewer than three regulatory agencies to ward off advertising excesses. The Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority are the watchdogs for broadcasting. For everything else, the Advertising Standards Authority stands guard. The ASA is no bastion of straightforwardness. Last year, it refused to condemn the most-complained-about advertisement — the Gossard Glossies poster of a beauty reclining in scanty underwear in long grass under the caption: "Who said a woman can't get pleasure from something soft?" (Depressingly, the ASA annual report reveals, most of the objectors were upset not by the innuendo but by the transparency of the bra.)

Advertising needs watching. Andy Warhol's painting of the Campbell's soup tin proved that recognisable brand labels are common currency of our culture. For that reason, the ASA was right to demand the withdrawal, after just four complaints, of the Nintendo ad showing a young woman

chained to a bed with fear on her face. An image tolerated is an image endorsed.

But political advertising should be granted more leeway. The ASA says it tries to allow for bickering and caricature. Still, after 167 complaints about the "demon eyes", it felt that withdrawal could legitimately be demanded as the poster portrayed the Labour leader in an "adverse and offensive" manner. (Is it not just as offensive to portray a leader as fat and overbearing?)

(It has yet to hear from Chancellor Kohl.)

Billboard advertising in the present campaign has been a flop — not because it is not hard-hitting enough, but because it is too subtle. It has fallen victim to the sin of British advertising postmodernism, which produces advertisements so minimalist that half the time you cannot tell whether they want to sell you a car or a beer. Or the Labour Party or the Tories. My favourite is the near-blank all-white hoarding on which, just as the traffic lights change, I detect a young man crouching in the right-hand corner and, high on the left, some text. Was the ad for jeans... the Liberal Democrats? I'll check next time I drive by.

The "demon eyes" complainants were concerned, the ASA says, to keep political advertising going down the slippery pole of American advertising". Here is another case where the US example has no relevance in Britain. American advertising must reach a vast disparate population spread over the breadth of a continent. Word play, innuendos, subtlety are out. So, too, are rules such as the British ban on political advertising over the airwaves. The American Constitution protects free speech, covers the right to advertise any product not actually proved to be harmful — even politicians.

The sincerest form of flattery? The Blair-Kohl advertisement has been compared to the 1968 *Esquire* magazine cover of candidate Hubert Humphrey sitting on President Lyndon Johnson's knee. As *The Times* pointed out, the new Labour poster of John Major and Kenneth Clarke as Laurel and Hardy resembles a Peter Brook cartoon of 1994. Graham Swift's Booker-winner, *Last Orders*, got nasty headlines for similarities with William Faulkner's *A S Laid Dying*. And where have I seen that bazaar scene in *The English Patient*? In *Casablanca*, that's where. Beautiful married woman in mannish hat encounters lovesick admirer in a Second World War North African marketplace. As small, dark lez-wearing foreigners scurry under arches, he tells her she has been cheated. Adulterous desires follow. Funny that *Casablanca* won only two Academy Awards, while the interminable *Patient* got nine.



BRENDA MADDOX

Yentob out of C4 picture

ALAN YENTOB, once hotly tipped as the next chief executive of Channel 4, will not succeed Michael Grade. He has been wiped from the bookies' slate. Yentob, the BBC's programme director, withdrew from the race because he decided he was "not available".

However, those who study

form take a different view. Channel 4 insiders suggest that Yentob's outlook on the network's future was a little "old-fashioned". One said:

"Perhaps he was too long with the BBC; it promotes an old-boy attitude."

Wherever the truth may lie, Mr Yentob's future with the Corporation remains secure.

A senior BBC manager said he was "a top executive with

much to do".

Phone pest

STRANGE reports reach us

that broadcasters are being tormented as the election results programme moves into top gear.

David Dimbleby, doyen of television political heavyweights, has been plagued with nuisance calls while re-



Yentob: "not available"

hearing for BBC1's *Election 97* results programme.

"It has been very distracting — the telephone rings on his desk and it is someone asking to book a table," an insider says. "Apparently, they think our studio at TV Centre is an Indian restaurant in Kew."

But BT says no record can be found of a similar number for a curry house.

David's father Richard,

suffered similar problems during an election results programme in the 1950s. Spotting the telephone on Dimbleby's desk, viewers believed they could talk to him on air; they

would be in for a long wait. Beni,

who turned 72 last week, is

attacking the prospect of five more years in Parliament with gusto. He says publication will certainly not be before 2000.

THE LISTENER

THE NEWS BEHIND THE HEADLINES

BY CLIVE JONES

calls jammed the BBC switchboard until the small hours.

• **KENITH TRODD**, the former BBC producer who worked closely with Dennis Potter, last night gave his first public lecture since being unceremoniously squeezed out of the Corporation in February. Trodd, who produced Potter's classic series *The Singing Detective* and criticised the Beeb even while working there, used the address to media students at de Montfort University in Leicester to vent his frustration over so-called management reforms at the Corporation.

"I am not a Neanderthal," he said. "Lots of changes need to take place. And I don't feel personally betrayed. What I do find disastrous are the lower-level apparatchiks, who take great pleasure in saying no to small requests. People like that send pompous memos using expressions such as 'I am disturbed'."

• **FRANK SPARRE**

TONY BENN, diarist and against impossible odds perhaps new Labour's last surviving socialist, is mortal after all.

His thoughts have turned to the tide of the last volume of his engaging memoirs of 47 years in Parliament: *Free at Last*. Political opponents may

be in for a long wait. Beni,

when the last issue is published on May 12, buyers will

be given a sample copy of *Now*, the statement said, and from the following week *Here!* will be incorporated into the IPC title.

"Every effort is being made to redeploy *Here!*'s staff within G&J (UK) and *Now* magazine," the statement added.

Going in to bat

TALK Radio, the national speech-based commercial radio station, is best-known for stirring up trouble on the airwaves through its provocative and outspoken phone-ins.

So is refreshing to see that the station has managed to take advantage of the recent pre-election appearances on their airwaves of John Major, Tony Blair, Paddy Ashdown and Sir James Goldsmith to foster a rare display of political good will.

Stan Park, the station's commercial director and cricket freak, persuaded all four leaders to sign a bat which will be sold to raise money for sports facilities for children with special needs. It will be auctioned at the Lord's Taverners' Spring Awards Lunch on Monday at London's Hilton Park Lane, where, incidentally, Michael Grade, outgoing Channel 4 chief executive, will make a rare guest appearance.

Bids will start at £2,000. Phone bids can also be made on 0171-222 0707.

Here and Now

THE WEEKLY gossip magazine *Here!* is being taken over by rival *Now* less than a year after its launch. The announcement was made in a joint statement by publishers Gruner and Jahr and *Now*'s owners IPC. Neither commented further.

When the last issue is published on May 12, buyers will

be in for a long wait. Beni,

when the last issue is published on May 12, buyers will

fended its somewhat humourless stance saying the poster "could potentially put people travelling with children in a difficult situation".

The move is most unusual and indicates a possibly worrying trend among media owners to become guardians of the nation's moral well-being.

BARTLE Bogle Hegarty, the agency behind the award-winning Levi's advertising, has scored a major coup for adland by winning the prestige Queen's Award for Export for the second year running.

The prize is in recognition of the high creative standard of its international work. The award came in handy last year, helping BBH to land such extra blue-chip international business as Cointreau and Time magazine.

BELINDA ARCHER

Del Boy for Chancellor



Del Boy: the people's Chancellor

THE British public would like Richard Branson to run the country. Sir Paul McCartney to be Home Secretary and Del Boy, David Jason's chirpy cockney character from *Only Fools and Horses*, to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, according to a new advertising agency poll.

The Bates Dorland survey comes after a study conducted in February in which the agency made the alarming discovery that Alan Shearer and other stars of sport and entertainment carried more voting clout than politicians. This time it asked respondents to imagine that all MPs have been abducted by aliens and so to construct a "fantasy Cabinet".

From a choice of both real and fictional characters ranging from Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, to Geri from the Spice Girls, Branson emerged as top choice for Prime Minister.

ADVERTISING

AN alarming wave of prudishness seems to be creeping through adland.

After last week's cautioning by the Advertising Standards Authority that agencies should display "greater sensitivity" in their portrayal of women, London Underground has taken the rare step of refusing to carry an ad that was actually waved through by the watchdog.

The ad, a poster for *Men's Health* magazine, featured the relatively innocuous line: "Why do women always fake orgasm? Because men always fake foreplay", and was aimed at plugging a new supplement on sex entitled "Sex secrets women wish men knew".

A press version of the poster was carried by *The Times* earlier this week, but London Underground de-

fended its somewhat humourless stance saying the poster "could potentially put people travelling with children in a difficult situation".

The move is most unusual and indicates a possibly worrying trend among media owners to become guardians of the nation's moral well-being.

BARTLE Bogle Hegarty, the agency behind the award-winning Levi's advertising, has scored a major coup for adland by winning the prestige Queen's Award for Export for the second year running.

The prize is in recognition of the high creative standard of its international work. The award came in handy last year, helping BBH to land such extra blue-chip international business as Cointreau and Time magazine.

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FRONT PAGE

Bringing politics a-Live



BBC Radio 5 Live sees the election as a chance to win new listeners, reports Alexandra Frean

BBC Radio 5 Live has successfully established itself as a powerhouse sports network, attracting more than one million listeners to its mid-week evening football coverage.

The only problem is that it is supposed to be a whole lot more than that.

The station, available only on AM, was conceived three years ago as a 24-hour rolling news and sports service. But while it has built a healthy following for sport, it has failed to stamp its imprint on the nation's consciousness as a news network.

That may all be about to change, as 5 Live sets out to prove, with coverage of its first general election, that it is bringing the same breezy approach to news as it has to football, golf and grand prix racing. "Sterile debates in the Commons, political point-scoring, party bickering can be incredibly tedious," says Roger Mosey, controller of Radio 5 Live. "A network like Radio 5 Live has to find a focus for people and say to them, 'This is what's happening to your life.'

"If you say it's about politics, it's a turn-off. But if you say it's about schools, hospitals or the community then they will be interested. The sleaze thing is a good example of how, if you are not careful, you can get into a very sterile point-scoring debate — the real thing about sleaze, the big picture, is to do with how it has alienated voters. If you can get that flavour into your coverage you both make it more accessible and realistic."

Mr Mosey appears to have already accomplished that with the launch of "Contact 5 Live", an off-air telephone hotline that listeners can use to tell the station what questions they would like it to put to politicians appearing on its shows.

Each time the line is mentioned on air, it receives hundreds of calls, exceeding even Mr Mosey's expectations. Its extensive use of the BBC's

regional network of correspondents also distinguishes the station from national news providers who focus heavily on London. "You get a very different perception of the campaign in Leeds than in Westminster. People who were around the country in 1992 were much more likely to spot that Labour's campaign had stalled than the people at Westminster news conferences," Mr Mosey says.

Radio 5 Live is not avoiding the setpiece conference altogether, however. It has been airing the party press conferences at length, sometimes in their entirety. "We are trying to avoid the soundbite culture. We play the press conferences long so that people can pick up the drama of the questions and answers and have a chance to make up their minds," Mr Mosey says.

Although it is too early to tell how well 5 Live's election coverage is doing, there is no doubt that during the "phoney war" that preceded the campaign proper the station lifted its audience levels. It reached a record 5.62 million listeners each week in January. In February, its audience share hit a record 3.6 per cent — no mean achievement at a time when audiences are fragmenting due to increased competition.

One of Mr Mosey's obvious problems in trying to push up the audience figures during the election is that his station is aiming at precisely that sector of the population — younger, mid-market listeners — which has been identified by the pollsters as showing a waning interest in party politics. The key to overcoming this obstacle largely in tone.

The tone of Radio 5 Live — illustrated best in the witty repartee of its breakfast show presenters Peter Allen and Jane Garvey — is friendly, informal, brisk and, mercifully, not terribly politically correct. Mr Mosey, who was editor of the Today programme before joining



Breakfast show presenters Peter Allen and Jane Garvey set Radio 5's breezy tone

ing 5 Live in December, is so pleased with the duo that he extended their programme by half an hour in February.

Significantly, the extension was advertised in three tabloids — the Express, Mirror and Star — a clear indication that it is not aiming for the Today programme's more upmarket audience. The strategy seems to have worked. Mr Allen and Ms Garvey now reach two million listeners a week, but have not dented Today's audience of five

million. As part of the continuing process of establishing his station as a news service, Mr Mosey plans to make Radio 5 Live live up to its name, replacing some of the pre-recorded features put out during the daytime with more live news. There will be a new look to Sunday mornings and a replacement for the daytime presenter Diana Maitil, who is leaving in the summer to concentrate on television work.

Mr Mosey regards the proposed launch next year of a 24-hour BBC television news

service as an opportunity for his radio station to expand its live coverage. Because Radio 5 Live has been made part of a new continuous news unit that also includes the forthcoming television channel, Mr Mosey will be able to gain access to an even larger pool of live feeds. "We want to have it so that if 5 Live is covering a breaking story, they can say on 24-hour television, 'Over on 5 Live they are talking about X' and then they will point their camera into that radiostudio," he says. "It's really exciting."

As John Major and Tony Blair await the verdict of the electorate, several editors and proprietors are equally pondering the future of their careers or their empires after May 1.

One, according to the Fleet Street rumour mill, is Clive Hollick, chief executive of the United News and Media group which owns The Express, who is almost certainly the most frustrated newspaper "proprietor" in Britain.

Hollick, a committed supporter of Labour who was made a life peer by Neil Kinnock, enthusiastically supports Tony Blair and, reportedly, increasingly relishes his new role in the newspaper industry.

Yet The Express will almost certainly endorse John Major and the Tories on May 1, even though under his stewardship its reporting of this election has been fairer to Labour than at any election in living memory. To back Blair would be too abrupt a departure from what Express readers expect — even though Hollick got a page in The Express on Sunday last weekend to argue the case for Blair while Lord Stevens, United's chairman, put the case for the Tories.

That was a civilised debate but the battle in the Express building as Hollick and Stevens fought for the political soul of The Express and Daily Star was by all accounts much more brutal: Stevens may have won that, but may be on his way out sooner than he expects.

So the question now being asked in Fleet Street is how long Hollick can live with himself and run a Tory tabloid. That is why the rumour mill suggests that Hollick may have set his sights on the Daily Mirror, the paper that has always been Labour's most faithful friend — or on switching The Express from its historic role as a Tory tabloid to a Blairite tabloid.

Still smarting from being outwitted by the Mirror chief executive, David Montgomery, when he was on the Mirror board, Hollick would not only relish his revenge, but would also be seen by Labour as a more natural owner of the paper.

All support is welcome and The Mirror has put all its effort behind new Labour in the past four weeks (especially in a brilliant front page last week devoted to a letter from a nurse complaining about hospital conditions). But Blair and his colleagues are repudiated embarrassed by some of The Mirror's other editorial

anies, which have lacked gravitas associated with the paper in its days of glory. Hollick certainly has the financial muscle to bid for The Mirror — and the plan if he succeeded would be to reinvent the paper as a mass market tabloid supporting the Blair revolution.

Whether or not Hollick succeeds in his rumoured ambition, changes seem certain at both the Express and Mirror groups. Bridget Rose, now Editor of the Sunday Mirror, is strongly tipped to take over The Mirror from Piers Morgan.

If Hollick remains at The Express, there are at least question marks over the future of Richard Addis, its Editor, especially if he decided to turn it into a Blairite tabloid set against the Tory Daily Mail.

The Fleet Street rumour mill is equally at work about the future of The Observer, suggesting that The Guardian wants rid of it. According to this rumour, buying the Observer was an act of hubris; it loses money and limits the ability of The Guardian (which made a small profit last year) to expand and compete with The Times and The Independent. So why not cut the losses and sell the paper, or merge with The Independent on Sunday.

There are several potential buyers — the Barclay brothers (already owners of The Scotsman and The European), Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers (which already has a stake in The Independent), and Mohamed Al Fayed's Liberty group. David Montgomery (the Mirror group has a stake in The Independent) is also reputedly anxious either for a merger or a deal to share costs.

It is a rumour that refuses to die in spite of repeated denials from The Guardian. Robert Gavron, once owner of the St Ives printing group and a man with a keen eye on the bottom line, has been an unusually active non-executive chairman of the Guardian Media Group recently. Yet at least two offers have been rejected in the past three years and Hugo Young, chairman of the Scott Trust which owns GMG, strenuously denies the rumours. The word from The Guardian is that the Trust is committed to The Observer and that Gavron is attracted by the challenge of restoring its fortunes. If GMG is indeed committed to The Observer but needs to raise money it is more likely to sell regional assets rather than The Observer.

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THE TIMES TODAY

WEDNESDAY APRIL 23 1997

NEWS

ITV rebuked for diet of soaps

■ Independent television companies were reprimanded yesterday for flooding their schedules with soaps and drama serials, and told: "The rot has got to stop."

Peter Rogers, chief executive of the Independent Television Commission, deplored the lack of diversity on ITV and the unremitting diet of long-running serials that were "increasingly dominating the early evening schedules". Drama was crowding out other forms of entertainment Page 1

TV companies bar anti-abortion film

■ A party political broadcast showing an abortion being performed has been banned by all major television companies for breaching guidelines on taste and decency. Anti-abortion campaigners will go to the High Court today to appeal against the decision Page 1

Falklands factor

Labour flatly denied claims by the Argentine Defence Minister that it would hand over the Falkland Islands if it won the election. The party said it was an "Argentine try-on" during an election campaign Page 1

Heart pump hope

A British surgeon who has perfected a titanium artificial pump no bigger than a thumb hopes to have the first device transplanted into a human body within the year Page 1

Boy accuses school

A boy aged 10 whose arm was broken when a fellow pupil gave him a Chinese burn won permission to take his school to the High Court over its failure to take action after the incident Page 2

Transsexual loses

A transsexual who was born female has lost a long court battle for legal recognition as the father of his partner's daughter Page 3

Fight for space

Plans by the Army for a £45 million expansion of its training area in the heart of Northumberland National Park went before a public inquiry Page 5

Prey to boredom

The Archbishop of Canterbury has appealed for clergy to make their sermons more interesting. "Dullness is the bane of preaching," he said Page 6

Tolkien saga lords it over Bible

Tolkien's epic fantasy, *The Lord of the Rings*, has been voted "favourite book of all time", beating Austen, Dickens and Shakespeare. A survey by the Folio Society asked book-buyers to nominate books that had most influenced them. The Bible was relegated to thirty-fifth place. Tolkien topped a poll of favourite 20th-century books in January Page 4



Tony Blair reaches out to a voter during a visit to Luton. The Bedfordshire town was John Major's first port of call in the election campaign

BUSINESS

Candid Co-op: A director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society admitted holding secret meetings with Andrew Reagan, the entrepreneur planning a hostile bid Page 29

Auditor clings on: KPMG, which failed to detect a £90 million black hole in the accounts of NatWest Bank, is to stay on as the company's auditor after surviving repeated calls for its dismissal Page 29

Xtra shares: Halifax Building Society has named June 2 as the date it will float on the stock market, triggering a shares giveaway Page 29

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 17.4 points to close at 4346.1. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 99.5 to 100.1 after rise from \$1.6348 to \$1.6370 and from DM2.7824 to DM2.8011 Page 52

Iranian wargames

Iran began a military exercise intended to prepare troops against a feared surprise attack by America or Israel Page 16

Fatal delay by FBI

The FBI significantly delayed the capture of Aldrich Ames, the CIA double-agent who sent at least ten allied agents to their deaths, a US Justice Department report has concluded Page 17

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Yesterday: Highest day temp: Ventnor, Isle of Wight, 15C (59F); lowest day temp: Sella Ness, Shetland Islands, 5C (41F); highest day temp: 0.278C, highest sun-shine: Herne Bay, Kent, 12.7%

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THE TIMES



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SECTION

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TODAY



CATALUNIA

That heady feeling takes over a region and its festival
PAGES 36-39

CREME

Why the City of London is looking for go-getters
PAGE 47

SPORT

Rowing's Fab Four sets course for Sydney Olympics
PAGES 50-56

TELEVISION AND RADIO PAGES

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY APRIL 23 1997



Melmoth: led board discussion on how to fend off bid

Green: secret meetings

Regan: involved in setting up of Galileo to handle bid

CWS director confesses to helping Regan bid

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

ALLAN GREEN, one of the directors suspended last week by the Co-operative Wholesale Society, admitted yesterday that he has been secretly meeting the two men planning a hostile bid for the society.

It also emerged yesterday that Nomura, the Japanese bank, is the chief backer of the bid. It was apparently preparing to lend £1.2 billion to Galileo, the vehicle set up by Andrew Regan and David Lyons of Lanica Trust to carry out the bid.

According to an affidavit received yesterday afternoon by Linklaters & Paines, CWS's solicitors, Mr Green, who became head of retailing last November, admitted meeting Andrew Regan and David Lyons six or seven times in the last six months. Documents

handed over included: copies of management accounts; draft proofs of accounts for the financial year; lists of stores and their market value; details of membership; and documents showing voting rights of corporate members. Mr Green says he is not sure of precisely how many documents he gave to the two men.

This morning Mr Regan and Mr Lyons are due to hand over affidavits and documents received from Mr Green. They went to the High Court yesterday to seek a 24-hour extension to the order which should have seen them hand over the documents and affidavits at 4pm. They said they needed more time to gather the documents. CWS contested the extension, but Justice Lloyd granted them a further 18 hours. The court will decide on Friday whether the injunction remains in force.

Legal representatives of the CWS went to the Serious Fraud Office yesterday to re-

quest that it open an investigation into payments made by Mr Regan during an earlier deal. The deal in question involved the extension of a contract between CWS and Hobson, the food manufacturing arm the Co-op sold to Mr Regan in 1993 and which he subsequently sold to Hillsdown Holdings.

The CWS has queried why more than £2 million was paid to advisers, including a businessman named Ronald Zimet. Mr Regan wrote to the CWS yesterday insisting that the sum paid to Mr Zimet, believed to be over £1 million, was "reasonable". Hillsdown Holdings is believed to have supplied the CWS with files on the deal done when it bought Hobson, and these have now been passed on to the SFO.

A spokesman for Nomura

International said yesterday that it had been preparing to complete legal formalities to provide Galileo, the vehicle set up to carry out the bid. It is understood that it is still prepared to back Galileo if the legal problems are resolved.

Nomura, which is not intending to take any equity in the deal, was notified on Monday by CWS's solicitors of the court order that all documents from Mr Green be handed over. It immediately sent all the relevant documents to Galileo's solicitors, Travers Smith Braithwaite, and agreed not to make any use of the material.

Under the Galileo proposal, it is understood the £1.2 billion would be used to pay £1,000 each to 500,000 active members, with some £10 million going to the Co-op union.

By CAROLINE MERRELL

M&G, one of the UK's biggest and best-known fund managers, is planning a complete overhaul of its investment strategy to improve its poor investment performance.

The company, which used Lord Lawson of Blaby, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, in its recent advertising campaign, has come under increasing pressure from independent financial advisers (IFAs) to tackle its performance problems. IFAs provide M&G with half its business but they have become increasingly reluctant to advise clients to invest with the company.

The fund management house will, over the next few weeks, give details of its new investment style in a series of meetings with top IFA firms. The fund manager wants to operate a more "disciplined" approach to fund management. Michael McLintock, M&G group managing director, said too many of the company's funds were managed in a similar way, which meant they all performed badly at the same time in the economic cycle.

He said: "We are planning to have a more disciplined approach. We are not going to abandon our value style, but investors will have more choice about volatility and the level of risk on funds."

M&G's traditional "value" approach has led it to invest in stocks with higher dividend yields. Although successful over many years, recently the policy has produced disappointing results. Its £1 billion Midland & General unit trust, for example, is the worst-

performing fund in its sector over three years, while its Recovery fund is 125th out of 135 in its sector.

A recent investment trust launch attracted only £20 million of new money after IFAs failed to support it. Similar launches in the past have pulled in more than £200 million. M&G still has a total of £6 billion under management and more than 700,000 client accounts.

Mr McLintock said M&G's performance had improved recently, and its practice of buying up higher yielding companies is beginning to pay off.

In the first three months of this year, the time when most investors take out Peps, M&G took only £150 million into Peps, despite its annual £9 million spend on advertising. Last year it took more than £300 million in the period.

Clive Scott-Hopkins, marketing director of Towry Law, one of the UK's biggest firms of independent financial advisers, said he had written to David Morgan, the M&G chairman, expressing his dissatisfaction about the "disastrous" performance of the company. He said: "They should put the same emphasis on managing the funds as they do on marketing them." He said he would recommend M&G trusts only if a client specifically asked for M&G.

Lord Lawson was re-elected to the board of Barclays Bank yesterday, despite shareholder anger over his endorsement of a rival company. He is reputed to have received £100,000 for appearing in the M&G advertisements while he was a non-executive director of Barclays.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	4346.1	(+17.4)
Yield	3.72%	
FTSE All share	2104.68	(+5.77)
Nikkei	7854.45	(-7.27)
New York		
Dow Jones	8705.98	(+45.75)
S&P Composita	763.32	(+2.95)

US RATE

Federal Funds	8.14%	(8.14%)
Long Bond	94.15%	(94.15%)
Yield	7.07%	(7.07%)

LONDON MONEY

£-min Interbank	81.95%	(81.95%)
£-long gilt	100.00%	(100.00%)
Rate (Jan)	100.00%	(100.00%)

STERLING

New York	1.6385*	(1.6385)
London	1.6388	(1.6388)
DM	2.8009	(2.7829)
FF	3.8000	(3.7800)
FR	2.3824	(2.3693)
Yen	206.55	(205.21)
E Index	100.1	(99.5)

\$ DOLLAR

London	1.7140*	(1.6983)
DM	8.7880*	(8.7330)
FF	12.4100*	(12.3410)
FR	125.20*	(125.33)
Yen	103.7	(103.6)

TOKYO close Yam 128.08

* denotes midday trading price

Floodtide

Underwriters at the Lloyd's of London insurance market are taking seriously the risk of severe flooding caused by global warming and coastal erosion, especially along the east coast. Page 30

Store openings

DFS, the soft furnishings group based in Doncaster, is planning to open up to 20 new stores during the next three years and to boost its presence in London and the South East. Page 31, Tempus 32

KPMG criticised on 'black hole'

BY ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

KPMG, the auditor, has survived harsh criticism from a minority of NatWest Bank's shareholders in spite of its failure to detect a £90 million "black hole" for more than two years.

At a sometimes stormy annual meeting in London yesterday shareholders repeatedly called for KPMG to be dismissed. However, although KPMG was rejected on a show of hands, City institutions voted overwhelmingly in a subsequent ballot to back the auditor.

Lord Alexander of Weedon, chairman of NatWest, said he understood the concerns raised by shareholders over the "black hole" in the interest rate derivatives division. However, he insisted that "in the interests of natural justice" nothing could

A&L shares close under auction low

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

ALLIANCE & LEICESTER shares fell 33½ p yesterday to end the day at 53½p.

The fall in the price was put down to some profit-taking, but is bound to disappoint many private investors who bought shares on Monday when the price hit 57½p. Sixty-five million shares changed hands — this figure included the 52 million shares sold at the second of three auctions held by Cazenove, the broker. The auctions are dealing with the 27 per cent of shareholders who opted to sell their shares immediately.

The average price of the shares at the second auction was 55½p. The highest price paid was 57½p, while the lowest was 53½p. Sellers will get the average price from all auctions.

Pennington, page 31

City Diary, page 33

Halifax could fuel £1bn spree

BY ANNE ASHWORTH

THE first Saturday in June promises to go down in retail history as thousands of Halifax borrowers and savers have their first chance to spend their long-awaited windfalls.

As much as £1 billion could be ready for spending on June 7 — even if only 10 per cent of the 7.6 million beneficiaries opt to cash in their part of the £1 billion free share distribution at the earliest opportunity.

Stock market dealings in Halifax shares will start on Monday, June 2. But those who opt to sell through the first auction of shares to institutional investors on May 30, will be able to withdraw the proceeds from their accounts on Friday, June 6, ready to hit car showrooms, clothing and furniture stores and travel agencies the next day.

The Halifax said it had put a special mechanism in place to ensure that its customers did not suffer if there was a market setback during its first days as a quoted company.

Next Monday, it will publish a "floor" price for the shares. If the market price drops below the floor, customers who have opted to sell immediately will be asked to reconfirm their intention.

The floor price will be above the 300p quoted in January as the lowest estimate. The mid-price was 420p. On present market conditions, James Johnson, of Credit Lyonnais Laing, sees a mid-price of 458p. That means the average windfall will be worth £1.400.

Buying a 3.6 per cent holding from two directors, Bernard Roux and Jean François Bentz.

Des Gunewardena, another director and close business associate of Sir Terence, said the sale was a sign of how well Fitch was doing. He said: "There is a lot of demand for Fitch shares and very few holders. Sir Terence satisfied that demand to get some liquidity into the company. That's the reason, not a loss of faith."

Fitch has been accelerating almost as fast as its latest design, for the McLaren Formula One car, which won the first grand prix this year. In the UK, profits recovered 67.4 per cent to £14.000. Earnings per share grew almost 30 per cent last year.

Sir Terence still has a 21 per cent stake worth £3.4 million. An investment trust managed by Robert Fleming bought his shares. The trust now holds a 7.8 per cent stake after also



Conran: sentimental attachment

Conran sells a million Fitch shares

BY OLIVER AUGUST

f39

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AUD

□ NatWest managers more culpable than KPMG □ Time to pick up the board over Penguin □ Unilever as a solution

□ RARELY do auditors suffer the indignity of being sacked from their posts and there was never really any doubt over KPMG's survival as the firm to sign off National Westminster's accounts. The show of hands from irate investors at the bank's annual meeting yesterday would have had them out on their ears but Lord Alexander had a mountain of proxy votes in his pocket to ensure the firm held on to this chunky bit of business.

The people who make the pilgrimage to annual general meetings are a special breed, prepared to sit through long speeches, tedious questions and increasingly often that ultimate horror, the company video. Their knowledge of accounts may be limited. But what was clear at NatWest yesterday was their touching, and misplaced, belief in the auditor as their protector.

These simple souls take the view that if the books are wrong to the tune of £90 million, then the chaps from KPMG should spot that something is amiss. They find it hard to imagine, even after the Barings debacle, that a maverick trader could distort the figures to such an extent without being discovered.

But that is the danger of the new markets that the investment

banks have embraced so enthusiastically. NatWest is now embarked on its inquiry into what failings of control led to its stumbling into such a black hole, but, no matter how deep the probing goes, the answer will inevitably point to a failure in management controls.

There are many instances when auditors could and should be held culpable for losses that must, eventually, be paid for by shareholders. The debacle at Wickes is one that certainly raises issues over the role of those who so trustingly signed off the accounts. At NatWest, however, the shareholders had the wrong target in their sights. Although KPMG collected more than £14 million from the bank last year, that would be nowhere enough to pay for the amount of time necessary for the operations to be scrutinised in a way guaranteed to pick up the problem in its early stages. Only management can fulfil that role. What shareholders now need to be assured of, not just at NatWest

but at the other gambling dens in the City, is that the lines of responsibility are clear and the policing systems are effective.

Bringing Pearson to book

□ NEXT week, Pearson shareholders will have their first chance to question the board about one of the oddest events in the company's history, the apparently profitless fraud at Penguin Books in the US. When the affair was first revealed, the company was able to get away with bland assurances that laid any wrongdoing at the door of a single, junior female employee. This explanation never really hung together then, and it seems even less likely now.

The internal inquiry into the affair is largely complete. It has emerged that there was an unspecified number of other employees who were either involved or even instigated it. The question is just how far up the

bell to take their grievances to court, but Pearson is confident it can keep the lid on their claims.

We are still no clearer as to why those involved set up the scam, paying unofficial discounts that appeared to benefit no one at Penguin.

The closest parallel this side of the Atlantic was the £50 million "black hole" at Wickes. Although, like Mr Mayer, the Wickes chairman, Henry Sweetnam, was in no way to blame, he still repaid £720,000 in profit-related bonuses, and his former finance director another £485,000. So how much of Mr Mayer's salary over the years has been profit-related?

City looking for 'big idea' from ICI

□ MAKING an impact at ICI is no minor task. Sir John Harvey-Jones found that flowing locks and flamboyant ties helped; Sir Denis Henderson opted for a lower key, but arguably more

effective, approach. The present incumbent, Charles Miller Smith, has still to make his mark and, two years after his recruitment from Unilever, the City is anxious for evidence of what his regime may achieve. Tomorrow's first-quarter results are likely to offer a similar serving of gloom from price pressures and a surging pound that has dogged a company which, so far, seems unable to offer a radical way of lifting itself from the old-style problems of cyclical business.

But without resorting to a Harvey-Jones-style tap dance, Miller Smith should be able to inject a little optimism into his performance. The suggestion that he would take over all or part of Unilever's chemical business would indicate that he intends to be a positive force in building ICI's future. This would be a move further into the consumer-led market that ICI needs to be targeting. ICI could afford all four of the chemicals businesses Unilever is selling and that would add to its

attractions as a buyer for Unilever, who would be keen to make a clean sale.

Without a Unilever buy or something of similar magnitude, industry watchers will grow impatient for action. True, ICI has been shedding operations, preparing to float the pigments division Toxicide and taking an axe to its costs, while talking of stretching its portfolio and cutting its exposure to industrial chemicals, which are the hostage of cyclical markets. But while it speaks of selling to raise a war chest for moving some of its operations into more consumer-oriented areas, its cheque book seems woefully underused. It could easily rustle up the £4 billion Unilever may want.

Regan-omics

□ THE extent of the internal support that Andrew Regan has secured in his attempt to take-over the CWS is now embarrassingly clear. The documents Allan Green poured into court yesterday would have overwhelmed many a corporate finance department. Regan is a sharp operator who spotted an opportunity, but his tactics and choice of willing associates, look more than unfortunate.

DFS continues store expansion as profits rise

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

DFS, the soft furnishings group based in Doncaster, is planning to open up to 20 stores during the next three years and boost its presence in London and the South East.

Sir Graham Kirkham, chairman, who is a noted Conservative Party supporter and whose son controversially donated £4 million to the party, was sanguine about the prospect of a Labour government. "We have to maximise our options wherever power is in power. What will be will be," he said.

The company yesterday reported a 23.6 per cent jump in pre-tax profit to £18.7 million in the six months to January 23. Turnover was up 43.9 per cent to £126.3 million, largely because of sales from newly opened stores. Like-for-like sales were up just 3.3 per cent.

The group had 40 stores at the half-year. It has opened 16 in the last two-and-a-half years, and its first stores in Greater London were opened during the last year. Further branches are set to open in the next few months at Leicester, Birmingham and Enfield. Talks are going on to open in Slough, Brighton, Thurrock and Poole.

Capital expenditure is expected to rise from £12 million to £15



Kirkham: special dividend

100 stores nationwide. He said market conditions had not improved perceptibly. "We have never relied on a buoyant economy to get our growth. Over 28 years we have traded through good, bad and mixed conditions."

He said that acquisitions were unlikely for the group. However, it will consider using its cash to pay for another special dividend at the end of the year. Last November it paid £10.4 million in a special dividend. However, Sir Graham said DFS is keen to retain cash in order to buy freeholds.

Analysts edged up their full-year pre-tax profit forecasts, with Parmenter Gordon shifting from £38.2 million to £39.5 million.

The company has £21.9 million cash which may be bolstered by £22.8 million from a VAT rebate. The payment depends on a House of Lords ruling expected this year concerning Primback, a privately owned London retailer, which has claimed that Customs and Excise overcharged it for VAT on interest-free credit schemes.

Earnings per share were 11.84p (9.59p). An interim dividend of 3.9p (3.1p) is payable on June 19.

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Delay for France Telecom

JEAN ARTHUIS, the French Finance Minister, said he had decided to delay the sale of shares in France Telecom by four weeks because of the early elections (Our City Staff writes). He said that the partial privatisation, which could be France's biggest, needed an important public relations campaign which was difficult to conduct with an election campaign.

Jacques Chirac, the French President, announced on Monday a snap two-round parliamentary election for May 25 and June 1. M Arthus said that, under a new timetable, the period that French private individuals can make reservations for shares will start around June 5.

The initial public offer proper will start on June 24 and end on July 1.

MSB plays down fears over 2000 bug

BY FRASER NELSON

MSB, the computer services contractor which joined the market last May, has played down the impact of the Year 2000 bug, and has dismissed as "ridiculous" reports of an exponential surge in contractors' salaries.

The company said that salary growth had not broken its five-year trend of 5 per cent, and was showing no signs of gathering pace in preparation for the millennium problem.

Mark Goldberg, managing director, said the company had seen very little revenue from the Year 2000 problem so far — in spite of recent forecasts that UK businesses will have to spend £31 billion on hiring programmers to deal with the bug.

He said: "We have 1,600 contractors and only a hand-

A final dividend of 4p makes a 6p total, due on May 30.

Strength of sterling costs SmithKline Beecham £41m

BY ERIC REGULY

THE strong pound reduced the earnings of SmithKline Beecham by more than £41 million in the first quarter and may cost the pharmaceuticals group £100 million in the full year.

Profits before tax rose 19 per cent to £459 million at constant exchange rates, but the strength of sterling cut actual growth to £418 million, up only 8 per cent. Profits will fall about 6 per cent in the full year if the pound remains at current levels, the company said.

Earnings per share rose 7

per cent to 10.2p in the period and would have climbed 18 per cent if the pound had remained at last year's levels. Overall sales declined 2 per cent to £1.84 billion.

The fall was triggered by a billing change implemented at Diversified Pharmaceuticals Services, the American-managed care business.

Strong sales from new products were behind the underlying sales growth. New products — defined as medicines introduced in the past five years — had sales of £354

million in the quarter, up 40 per cent.

An antidepressant called Seroxat/Paxil, with sales up 49 per cent to £197 million, was one of the star performers. Sales of new vaccines climbed 63 per cent. New paediatric vaccines also helped, along with sales of Nicorette and Nicoderm.

A first-quarter dividend of 4.41p, up from 4p, is to be paid on July 15. The shares closed at 935p, up 27p.

Tempus, page 31

EMI up amid renewed talk of being bid target

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

EMI shares jumped sharply yesterday after reports that it had broken off merger talks with Seagram prompted renewed bid speculation.

The music company's shares closed up 26p at £12.02p, as traders gambled that Seagram, which owns the MCA music business, might now consider a hostile bid. Bid speculation has sent

EMI shares on a rollercoaster ride since the company split from Thorn last summer. The shares peaked at £14.85 after demerger before hitting a low of £10.97 earlier this year.

EMI refused to comment yesterday on the merger talks, although it is understood to have held discussions with Seagram for a short period earlier this year. EMI is considered a good fit for Seagram as its strength

lies in Europe and emerging markets, while MCA sales are concentrated in America. But the market has not ruled out bids emerging from other American media giants including Viacom, Walt Disney, or Microsoft.

PolyGram, one of EMI's main music rivals, hinted at an improvement in the global music market as it reported a 9 per cent increase in first-quarter music sales. The success of

Pop, U2's new album, which has sold five million copies worldwide, helped the music division's operating profits to rise 19 per cent to 25 million guilders (£80 million).

But the company, which is UK based but Dutch owned, reported an overall fall of 1.6 per cent in first-quarter profits to £22 million guilders because of a disappointing performance from its film division.

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Trials bring tribulations for biotech share prices

BIOTECH companies fell sharply on overnight news from the US that important clinical trials being carried out on a possible cure for multiple sclerosis were worthless.

Auto-immune of Boston admitted that Myloral, its treatment, had performed no better than a placebo during phase III clinical trials. It is the latest in a series of setbacks for US biotech companies.

The news sent shares of Auto-immune tumbling on Wall Street by 50p to \$4.10 and highlighted the pitfalls faced by some of our own biotech companies. Some of them have been enjoying spectacular gains this year.

Among the worst fallers were Celtech, 25p to 557.1p; Chiroscience, 1p to 359p; Cortes International, 10p to 263.1p; and Innovative Technology, 2p to 310p. Scotia Holdings also fell 10p to 415p, despite Apax Partners topping up with a further 100,000 shares, taking its total holding to 2.5 million, or 3.29 per cent.

The rest of the equity market continued to be squeezed higher in thin trading after clawing back an opening fall, reflecting the overnight setback for Wall Street.

The FT-SE 100 index closed near its best of the session as the Dow Jones industrial average steamed back with an opening rise of 90 points in early trading.

The index in London closed 17.4 up at 3,461. Last night brokers were keeping a close eye on the opinion polls amid claims that the Labour Party's lead was being eroded. The City is worried by the prospect of a hung parliament.

Brokers reported further heavy turnover in Alliance & Leicester after completion of the second institutional auction for shares. It helped to boost total stock market turnover to 669 million shares.

By the close of business 65 million A&L shares had changed hands as the price dropped 33p to 53p. The average price bid this time was 55p, way above Monday's 52p striking price.

Continuing talk of a bid for A&L and persistent demand from the institutions as they attempt to increase their weightings in the stock, are expected to underpin the price in the weeks ahead. There was further selective support for the other banks, with Barclays putting on 61p at



Carpentright rose 12p for Lord Harris of Peckham, left, with John Kitching, centre, and Ian Sneyd, finance director

£10.35 after its annual meeting, and Royal Bank of Scotland 8p firmer at 552p. NatWest eased 10p to 693.1p after its annual meeting. Bank of Scotland reporting today, eased 11p to 338p.

EMI touched 12.20 before ending 26p dearer at 12.025p, as City speculators put it back into play as a takeover target. This latest flurry of speculation

remained reasonably buoyant, but sales of brown goods, furniture and carpet have all been dull, he says.

"I'm more bullish about the future for the bigicker items such as carpets and furniture. Shares of the carpet retailers are all well off their best levels and should be due for a revival," adds Mr Bubb.

Those companies he expects to do best in the months ahead include Allied Carpets, 1p easier at 251.1p and Lord Harris of Peckham's fast growing Carpentright, 12p firmer at 522.1p, where John Kitching is managing director. Others expected to benefit are MFI Furniture, 4p off at 139p; Kingfisher, including Comet and B&Q, 2p cheaper at 662.1p, and Dixons, 3p up lower at 511.1p.

Shares in MEPC — which on Monday cancelled some interest rate swaps in a deal yielding benefits until 2010 —

closed up 13p better at 470p. Talk of a bid from Hammerson, unmoved at 430p, continues to do the rounds.

News of margin pressure left MSB International nursing a loss of 22.1p at 407.1p. Alpha Airports rose 9p to 113.1p ahead of results on Friday. Mohamed Al Fayed owns 25 per cent, which he

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A peculiarly Japanese scandal has sunk Nomura. Securities into what its humbled chairman describes as "the worst crisis since it was founded". To Nomura's bitter, mostly American, rivals the travails of Japan's biggest and most global securities house are a source of glee. The stockbroker that briefly became the world's biggest at the end of the 1980s could be out of the corporate finance business in its home country for three months.

To outsiders events unfolding in Tokyo seem bizarre. In 1991, Nomura and other Tokyo houses were excoriated for guaranteeing selected clients against losses when the markets turned sour. Now it appears to be guilty of twin crimes: conducting clients' accounts on a discretionary basis and buying off blackmailers.

Neither would seem bad in Britain. Both are illegal in Japan because that helps a necessary process of transition in the investment business. Under pressure from American industry and from flag-carrying US investment banks, Japan has spent the past decade reforming itself

Murky present muddies Nomura's global waters

because it was too successful. A pragmatic, manipulated economy that worked but did not bear legalistic scrutiny is being converted to a more open, rule-based economy. So far, this reform has delivered only bubbles, extended recession and grief. As decades of success gave way to failure, tolerance of dodgy methods has given way to anger and distrust.

For all its apparent modernity and global pretensions, Nomura appears to have been trapped in the past. It is still doing what the powerful bureaucrats of Tokyo were doing ten years ago. It has paid lip-service to reforms but quietly carried on in the old ways.

At home, the public has tired of it. The 1991 scandals seemed to many Europeans an enviable example of brokers looking after their clients. In Japan, those who were not looked

after and suffered the crash were fed up with the cosy old ways. In 1997, Nomura is not the only company to be attacked for allegedly buying off *sokaiya* racketeers who traditionally disrupt company annual meetings and embarrass directors.

As empty-pocketed private investors note, the gangsters could hardly operate unless there was plenty of dirt to expose. Paid-off *sokaiya* also make sure that other shareholders keep quiet and do not rock the boat. Japan's down-trodden small shareholders have just won a small, but potentially significant victory in their uphill battle to make Japanese management more accountable, more open and less corrupt. Executives of Japan's oldest department store, Takashimaya, agreed to repay nearly £1 million to the company to compensate

for extortion payments to *sokaiya*. Two employees of Ajinomoto, Japan's largest food company, have been arrested on suspicion of bribing nine *sokaiya*. Other offenders include a score of famous names.

Ironically, the resignation of virtually all Nomura's group top managers (albeit only to "adviser" status) is a traditional Japanese penitence. Mrs Watanabe, the backstreet investors who made Nomura great, were deserting in droves. Ritual sacrifices had to be made. This confirms comforting Western clichés about Japan. In Nomura's case, however, it is bound to raise suspicions that the ambitious group may say one thing and do another abroad too.

Junichi Ujiiie, the new generation boss, won a university degree in Chicago and ran Nomura's US

operations. But does his semi-outsider status make him clean? The Australian Securities Commission is investigating charges that Nomura in the Far East illegally manipulated the Sydney stock exchange.

Hitoshi Tonomura, Anglophilic head of Nomura's European operations, was one of the first to take the rap. A closer look may now be taken at Nomura's role in four controversial UK deals. It was the enabler of Phoenix Ins. a company that bought two sprawling pub-owning companies from Innkeeper, the secret alliance between Grand Metropolitan and Fosters. Nomura bought one of three train-owning companies sold cheap by the state. It was the power behind Arlington Homes, which paid £1.7 billion for 57,000 married quarters and is shortlisted to buy Britain's benefit office in an even bigger state deal.

Potential partners round the globe will watch Tokyo to find out if Nomura's culture is really changing.

GRAHAM SEARJEANT AND ROBERT WHYMANT



ANTHONY HARRIS

Two saints and the long-dead inflation dragon

A very senior friend at the Treasury once said: "What you have to understand is that the Chancellor is not quite sane." That was in late 1990. Fate had chosen a dramatic moment for me to return to this country from a spell in Washington. Britain had just joined the ERM, Mrs Thatcher was in the toils, and I needed briefing. "John Major," my friend went on (remember the Major Chancellorship?), "is simply obsessed with inflation. He seems to think that nothing else matters."

And not much seems to have changed in the six years since; only last week Major was telling my senior colleagues that he expected to be remembered as the man who killed inflation. Really? Was it Major who stopped inflation in Chile and Argentina, in Spain and Italy — all much bigger falls than here — and who caused prices to fall in Sweden and Switzerland? We must all have been under-estimating the man. Not even Canute's courtiers imagined one ruler could have such wide influence so it is comforting to know that his legacy is in the hands of Gordon Brown, who also talks like an inflation hawk.

Diverse in output all these companies may be, but all are, of course, linked by their exposure to currency fluctuations because of their emphasis on exporting. Ian Campbell, director-general of the Institute of Export, says: "A lot of people are now saying we are going to have to consider seriously whether we can stay in the export market. They are saying 'we can't afford to do this business now'."

Mr Campbell tells how one of the institute's member companies recently returned a subscription renewal. Written across the letter was a note that said: "Dear Ian, What the hell are you doing? Why can't someone do something about sterling — it's KILLING us!"

Such pleas are heartfelt, and widespread, with industry bracing itself for what it sees as a new, long battering on a par with the recessions of the early Eighties and Eighties. While acknowledging that most readjustments will have to be made by companies themselves, and that some will be painful, the institute is arguing too for some policy readjustments, maintaining that the Bank of England, for instance, does not need to be so concerned about possible inflationary dangers and that steps ought to be taken that would help to ease back the pound.

Price, of course, is not the only basis on which British exporters compete. But with a price disadvantage on the scale now offered by the change in sterling, competing on grounds of quality, or reliability, or delivery, or any other factors, is made even tougher in an already tough market, and undermines export confidence — as today's CBI survey will show. And the painful adjustments that a long-term shift in the exchange rate might imply could well feed through from exports, on which the economic recovery in the Nineties has been based, to confidence in the economy more generally.

Mr Campbell said: "We are looking to build markets into the 21st century. And in those markets, a 22 per cent price disadvantage against the Germans is a heck of a hill to climb."

Or as Mr Freeman of Sabre puts it: "We believed for the last couple of years that growth was going to come from exporting more. I'm now starting to doubt that."

in business planning ought to read it. Plans based on "inevitable" price rises or "cheap" credit can come disastrously unstuck, as the Japanese can testify.

What about governments and central bankers? You might think that you can't be too vigilant about inflation: Bootle disagrees. If he is right global trading, labour-shedding and the rise of the service economy have killed the forces that caused post-war inflation, and in that case the price of outdated vigilance (like that of maintaining Trident when there is no Cold War) could be very high. At the lowest, it could mean stifling growth, which would provide jobs and hope — the point Alan Greenspan has grasped, as the Fed experiments with allowing supposed inflationary levels of money and employment growth.

At worst, Bootle fears, overcaution could capsize the boat the other way, tipping us all into slump.

Although current events across the Channel look like a timely warning, this remains the most controversial part of his analysis.

Could the next bear market start an almost unstoppable deflation, as he fears? It very nearly happened in Japan after the 1990 crash; but supervisors in other major centres would rightly claim that they would never have allowed their banks to become so rickety and corrupt in the first place. My own guess would be that Bootle's fear is overdone, but Gordon Brown may still live to find his dreams haunted by deflation, not inflation.

Does Brown mean what he says, though? Like his leader, he seems to use language to conceal rather than reveal his thoughts; so it is perfectly possible that for all the talk, he really means to follow the policy of the late 1990s Bundesbank model. If you ever played the old party game of "Do as I do, not as I say", you will have noticed that although Buba talks tough to sustain confidence, it acts soft. It has repeatedly cut interest rates, and is actively pursuing devolution (so, by the way, are the Swiss). Bootleites, then, will hope that Brown proves a good European.

Exporters brace for battering on par with the recession

Strength of the pound is hitting firms, big and small, says Philip Bassett

The imminent general election has changed the format of the Institute of Directors annual conference today, wiping the usual heavyweight political speeches from the programme. But many in the audience will welcome an escape from the electioneering. Businessmen increasingly are coming to the view that whatever the make-up of the next government, they have to come to terms with living in a new, and tougher, business environment.

The strength of sterling is now making a real impact on industry and the expectation is that it is not going to lessen after May Day. For many, learning to live with a strong pound is likely to be more of a challenge than coping with life under a Labour government.

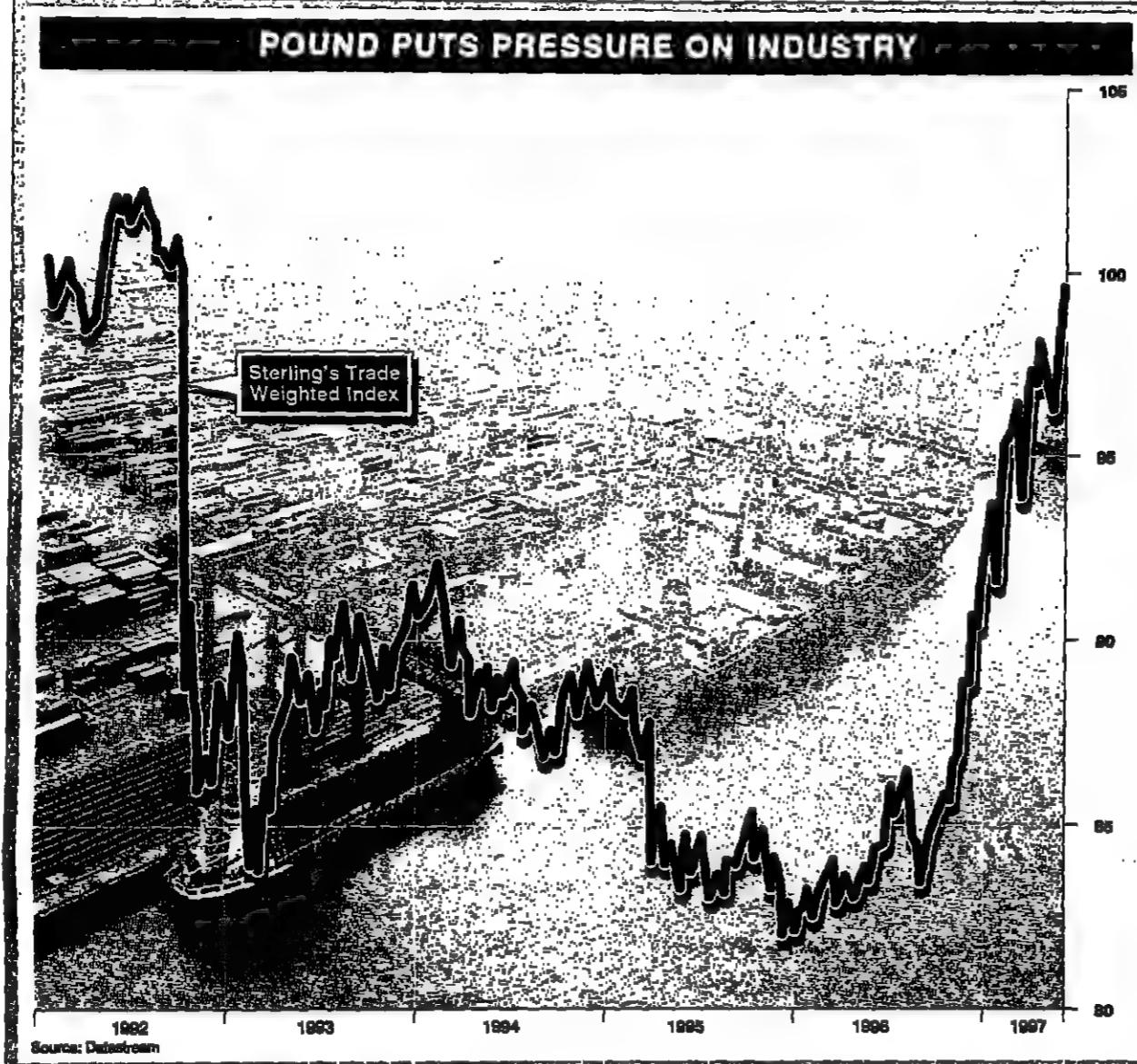
Paul Freeman, managing director of Sabre Engines, a small company making boating engines in Wimborne, Dorset, said: "We are certainly suffering. Our prices have effectively gone up by 23 per cent. That means we have lost business. We have lost sales — because of the pound."

Like many UK businesses and companies, he and Sabre are less concerned about the high politics of the general election, or Britain's place in Europe, than they are about what many see as their biggest and most immediate problem: the appreciation of sterling.

Today the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), with the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) to follow tomorrow, will give the last major economic figures, and in particular the last view of Britain's current performance from the perspective of the real economy before polling day.

Recent quarterly trends surveys from the CBI and the BCC have seen continuing optimism and growing output, in line with official figures on the economy suggesting a sustained, if slow, recovery. But in the midst of such confidence have lain worries: in particular, total orders falling back not because of the performance of the economy in Britain but because of the worsening position of exports as the rising pound has sliced away at the competitiveness of UK companies.

Tomorrow's BCC survey is likely to show a further sharp rise in the number of com-



Murphy's tip romps home

RORY MURPHY, the general-secretary of the NatWest Staff Association, who failed to secure election to the NatWest board yesterday in spite of popular support from small shareholders, has found another vocation. In his election speech he said the bank had lost £90 million, while all he had lost was £25 at the races. Murphy urged Martin Owen, head of NatWest Markets, to relinquish his directorship, adding that he should back Standford in the 3.20 at Pontefract yesterday. The nags duly won.

Staple for SIB?

A NEW name is being aired in City circles as the next head of the SIB to succeed Sir Andrew Large. George Staples, who has just returned to private practice after a five-year term as director of the

THE TIMES CITY DIARY



Serious Fraud Office, is being touted by heavyweight admirers in the Square Mile who feel that the ex-fraudbuster would be an ideal candidate. It would nearly triple his SFO salary, a paltry £105,000.

Kirkham currency

SIR Graham Kirkham, chairman of DFS and one of the Conservative Party's most outspoken and generous supporters, was unusually tongue-tied yesterday when quizzed on politics. He claimed, rather improbably, to have been gagged by Jon Massey, the furniture retailer's chief operating officer. Asked for his view on a single currency, Sir Graham said he didn't care

Millennium Solutions Theatre

Spelling error

whether a currency is called dollars, sterling, or euros. "If I've got plenty of them, I'll be a lot happier," said the son of a miner, estimated to be worth at least £300 million.

SHAME on Dresdner Kleinwort Benson for its contribution to the "Conex UK '97" software convention at London's Earls Court, a good part of which was devoted to the millennium problem. Centrestage in the exhibition hall stood "The Millennium Solutions Theatre".

Heidel's quest

MISSISSIPPI, the US State famous for its swamps and mud pies, has dispatched its first trade mission to the UK. Head of the team is Jimmy Heidel, the American football star, now throwing his weight at the Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development, ICI and Reckitt & Colman are among the UK firms already ensconced in the state. Another 19 British names feature on Heidel's list of hot prospects. "We've got quail, duck, and white-tailed deer hunting for when you're off duty and a hard-working, largely non-unionised workforce for when you're not," he says.

Best behaviour

FOLLOWING allegations that Andrew Regan is the victim of corporate spying, a survey looking at acceptable business practice lands on my desk. According to author Adam Pode, a PhD student at Loughborough University, hiring a professional investigator to ob-

tain information or luring an employee away from a competitor to get specific know-how is now considered acceptable. "Unless it's seen as illegal, people will do it, or get someone else to do their dirty work for them," he says.

BT flies high

A FLAW in the belief that a culture clash between BT and staid MCI is inevitable when their \$30 billion transatlantic phone merger in the autumn is complete. There's one aspect of MCI's culture that BT's top boys seem to adore — company jets. MCI has a small fleet of them: BT has none. Sir Ian Vallance, BT's chairman, has been getting a taste of millionaire luxury. He glided into Madrid last week on an MCI plane to seal BT's deal with Telefónica. BT has every intention of keeping the MCI fleet after the merger.

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Fortis

Catalans are feeling heady, not just because of festivals and flowers, but because the region is burgeoning commercially and politically. Michael Knipe reports

Catalonia drives towards the millennium

Both as the capital of the autonomous Spanish region of Catalonia and as a vibrant city in its own right, Barcelona exudes an air of self-confidence that few others in Europe can match.

Senior executives from more than 500 companies in nine European countries recently rated it the city with the best quality of life.

This sense of identity has been inspired, in part at least, by the bold and innovative regeneration of the city initiated by its hosting of the 1992 Olympics and also by the pivotal role once again being played by Catalonia in Spain's political life and its economic recovery.

It is a spirited state of mind, one that will be especially in evidence today as the region celebrates the festival of its patron saint, Sant Jordi (St George). Men, traditionally, give women red roses; women, in turn, give men books.

The Ramblas, Barcelona's main cultural and social artery, will be ablaze with colour and packed with promenaders. So will the smart modern shopping malls in the rejuvenated old port and the Olympic murina. Similar scenes will occur across the region.

It is just a year since Catalonia's political leaders gave their support to José María Aznar, the leader of Spain's conservative Popular Party, enabling him to become Prime Minister at the head of a minority Government. The



Joan Clos
in waiting

role of power broker was a familiar one for Jordi Pujol, the canny leader of the Generalitat, the autonomous regional government of Catalonia. He played the same role to Felipe González, the leader of the Spanish Socialist Party, who also headed a minority Government until last year.

As with the Socialists, Señor Pujol declined the participation of his party, Convergència i Unió (CiU), in a coalition cabinet with the victorious PP,

saying the CiU would enjoy more "freedom of movement" outside the Government.

And just as with the Socialists, it has proved fruitful. It has given Spain a stable Government — with a ruling party whose philosophy is more in line with the CiU's — and Catalonia has won more valuable improvements to its autonomous status.

Most notably, the amount of income tax returned to the region by the central Government has doubled, to 30 per cent. It has also won promises of further economic concessions, including control of the ports of Barcelona and Tarragona and the transfer of control of the police.

Catalonia has played a key role in the recovery that is enabling Spain to anticipate annual economic growth of 3.2 per cent between now and 2000. With an annual per capita GDP of more than £10,000, most Catalans, especially those in Barcelona, are better off than they might be elsewhere in Spain.

The most recent benefit is the central Government's accord with the Generalitat to spend 50 billion pesetas (£212 million) on expanding Barcelona airport. Most of the money will go on construction of a third runway and additional terminal buildings necessitated by the record

growth in human and cargo traffic.

"We still need a lot of investment in infrastructure," says Joan Clos, Barcelona's deputy mayor, who takes over as mayor in September. The investment made to stage the Olympics has paid off, he says. The Olympic Village and har-

bour marina had been sold to the private sector and the profits were being used to finance other projects. The city had gained modern transport links, environmental improvements and cultural facilities.

As a result, business rose significantly. The docks handled 10 per cent more contain-

ers than the previous year and 24 per cent more cruise passengers. Trade fairs last year drew more participants. The number of delegates attending conventions in the city was up by 20 per cent and tourist business rose by 15 per cent.

At the old port of Vell at the bottom of the Ramblas, work

has restarted on the construction of £100 million World Trade Centre. The area is already a great tourist attraction featuring Europe's biggest aquarium, cinemas, shops and restaurants.

A welcome result of this economic upturn is fewer unemployed. Barcelona's jobless

rate was cut to 9.4 per cent — five points lower than the national rate, the highest in Europe — and 13 per cent down on the total number in 1995. But it remains the single most pressing problem.

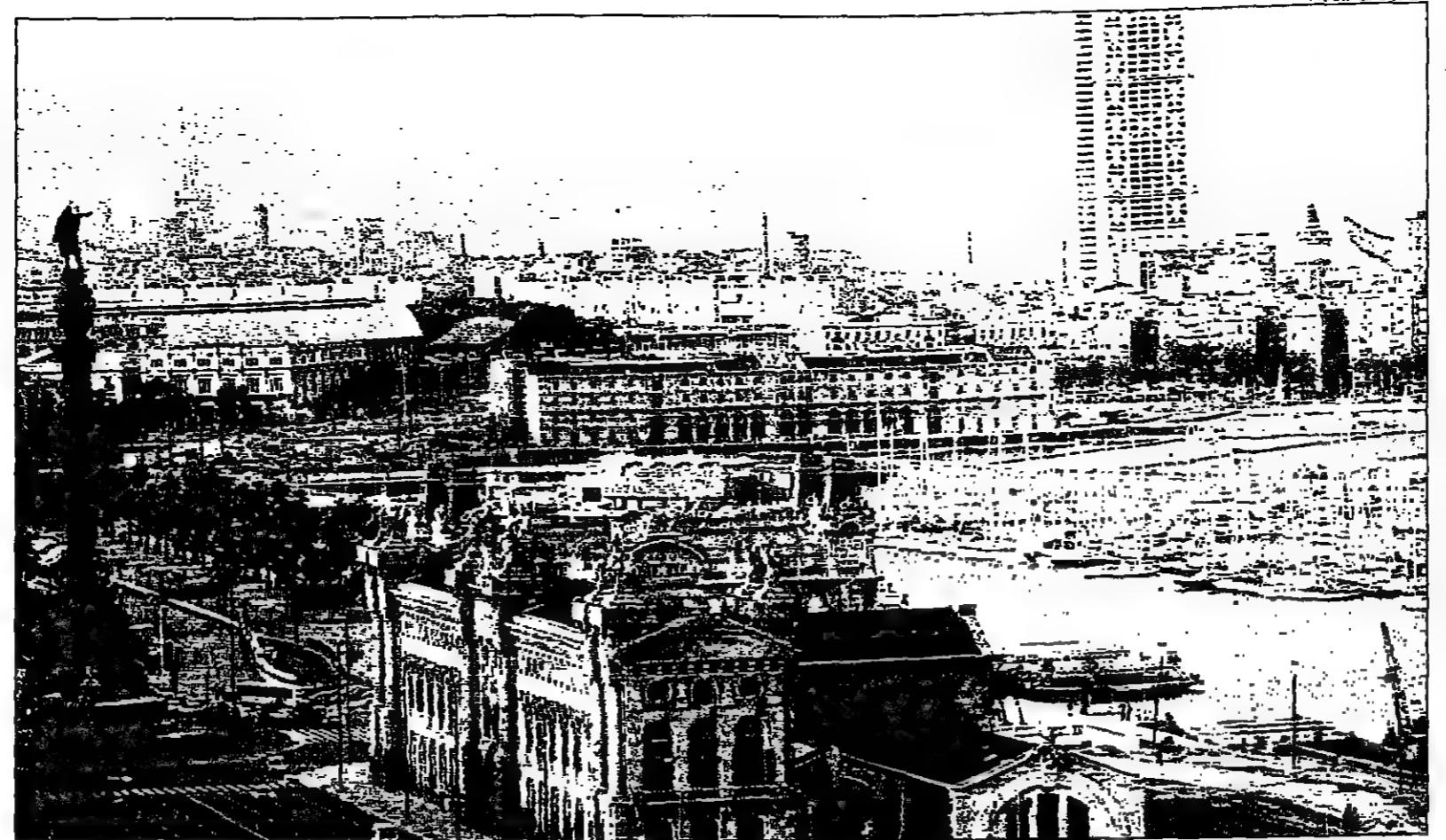
Economic analysts say that at least part of the problem is the lack of flexibility in the labour market, but the main trade unions and business associations are now reaching agreements that should reduce the cost of dismissing workers and introduce new labour contracts to convert temporary jobs to permanent ones.

As Catalonia is responsible for 20 per cent of Spain's GDP and a quarter of the country's industrial production (even though the region has only 6 per cent of land area and 16 per cent of the population), it has spearheaded the economic upturn under way nationwide. This has enabled the Madrid Government to boast that Spain now meets three of the five criteria for joining the European Monetary Union in 1997: currency stability, low long-term interest rates and low inflation — now 2.5 per cent.

Catalonia's economic strength is based primarily on its chemical, textile and automobile sectors, which are enhanced by clusters of small workshops and a tradition of entrepreneurial spirit.

Barcelona is being promoted as the Mediterranean's main distribution centre, a gateway to Europe for goods arriving from Asia and northern Africa. Catalans declare that it is coming to be seen as an unofficial cultural and commercial capital of the Mediterranean.

The monument to Columbus, left, overlooks Moll de la Fusta and Port Vell, a focus of Barcelona's wealth, with the customs house in the foreground



Heavyweights fight for a region's votes

Showdown between a mayor and president

The odds are shortening on the likelihood of an early showdown in Catalonia between the region's leading political gladiators, the veteran regional president and Spanish powerbroker, Jordi Pujol, and Pasqual Maragall, Barcelona's internationally renowned mayor. Michael Knipe writes.

After 14 years running the city, during which time he has won four elections and transformed Barcelona from a rundown seaport into a model of urban planning and bold architecture, Sr Maragall, a 58-year-old Socialist, is standing down in September and is expected to challenge Señor Pujol for the presidency of the Generalitat (the autonomous regional government of Catalonia).

Sr Pujol, 66, the father-figure of modern Catalan nationalism, has won six

consecutive elections as the leader of the centre-right Convergència i Unió (CiU) coalition and has been in office for 16 years. He, more than anyone, is responsible for its much-treasured autonomy.

Sr Pujol still commands great respect among Catalans, but his party lost its majority in the Catalan assembly in 1995 and the opinion polls indicate he has less support among voters than Sr Maragall.

The regional election is not due until 1999, but the poll has prompted speculation that the wily president might bring it

forward in the hope of nipping the mayor's burgeoning popularity in the bud.

The two rivals, who run their respective administrations from graceful 14th-century palaces facing each other across the elegant Sant Jaume Square, just off the Ramblas, have contrasting personalities.

Sr Pujol is an old-style political manipulator, never averse to consorting with his political opponents behind closed doors, while Sr Maragall has a smoother, more telegenic presence. But both share a dedication to nationalism rather than separatism and to Catalonia's European links.

Sr Pujol has been adept at trading his support in return for concessions for Catalonia. He is now the longest serving senior political figure in Spain and still delights in forcing the

city from an industrial to a



Catalan adversaries: Pujol, left, and Maragall

Spanish television channels to resort to subtleties by answering media questions in Catalan.

Sr Maragall was born to a middle-class family, but his popular appeal ranges from the city's cultural élite to the immigrant communities of the industrial suburbs. A specialist in urban planning and development, he has masterminded the transformation of

tourist centre and is respected by urban planners worldwide.

But, if he does decide to make a bid for the presidency of the Generalitat, he is by no means assured of defeating Sr Pujol.

When the opinion pollsters asked Catalans which of the two men could best be relied upon to defend Catalan's interests, only 15 per cent plumped for the mayor while 39.8 per cent stuck with Sr Pujol.

ASKED to compare the task of dealing with the former Government, led by Felipe González, and the present one, led by José María Aznar, Jordi Pujol, president of Catalonia, says: "The situations are different. What is important is that we are working on very similar programmes."

He stressed that his relations with the two premiers are strictly businesslike: "It is not to spend the weekend or holidays together, it is to discuss important political matters for Catalonia that affect Spain, based on our programme."

"The better relations are with whom we get on best politically — and this is what we'll have to see."

The word that crops up most in conversation with Sr Pujol is *convivencia* (coexistence).

Imprisoned for three years for his nationalist activities

contracts and combating unemployment. We have to sit down calmly; it's a very favourable moment for Spain and for Catalonia, and it's a good time to analyse if, finally, all these changes respond or not to the structure of Spain, a plurinational state."

Sr Pujol says his bilingual education policy will take one or two generations to come to fruition, with Castilians speaking Catalan and vice versa.

"This enables coexistence between all the citizens of Catalonia, and this is positive. The language is not a mule for internal confrontation."

"Catalonia has a strong society — imaginative, creative and hard-working. For example, our government has gained a reputation for being more 'business-minded' than Spanish governments in general, and this has had economic consequences in attracting foreign capital."

Putting a sparkle into exports

Britons just can't get enough of Cava, Catalonia's answer to champagne

As Spaniards develop an increasing taste for whisky, consumption of Cava, Catalonia's version of champagne, is decreasing by 5 per cent a year in its home territory. Michael Knipe writes.

But British bubbly drinkers are consuming much more of it — about six million bottles a year, which means that Cava is gradually catching up with its more illustrious French rival.

Manuel Duran, the deputy president of Freixenet, the leading Cava producer, says: "Our is a sparkling wine that undergoes precisely the same fermentation process as champagne. But we don't pretend to be the same as champagne. Cava has its own character, and people in Britain are beginning to realise that champagne is not the only fine-quality sparkling wine. In the UK,

our sales have now surpassed those of French and Italian sparkling wines and account for more than 30 per cent of the market."

Over the years, Catalonia has pioneered the development of high-quality Spanish wine, spurred by traditions of viticulture which stretch back to Roman times.

Catalan producers continue to dominate the Spanish market in fine wines. There are more than 260 winemakers in the region, producing more than 130 million bottles a year — 12 per cent of Catalonia's gross domestic product.

Two fiercely competitive companies are responsible for 70 per cent of production: Freixenet, the

dominant exporter, which sells more than 60 per cent of its produce abroad, and Cordon, which vies with Freixenet for leadership in domestic sales.

Freixenet sells more brut (dry) Cava in the UK, but a year ago began selling a gold-label version of Cordon Negro, a medium-dry. Sr Duran says sales are booming.

The gap between champagne sales and Cava sales is narrowing annually. One of the advantages Catalan producers have over their rivals in Champagne, says Sr Duran, is that because of the more uniform weather in Catalonia, vintages achieve the same excellence each year. "Some years are



better than others," he adds, "but the difference is not as great as in the north of Europe. We use only Catalan grapes — macabeo and xarello to give the wine its body and parallada mainly for flavour."

While the car industry has been shrinking in most parts of the world, Nissan announced last month that it plans to invest 100 billion pesetas (£424 million) in a factory in Catalonia to begin production of two multi-purpose utility vehicles and a utility sports car.

"It is the latest tribute to our competitive strengths in attracting direct foreign investment," said Jordi Conejos, director general at Catalonia's Department of Industry, Commerce and Tourism.

Nissan joins a long line of direct foreign investors, which have helped to shape Catalonia's buoyant economic profile and put Spain second only to France in attracting capital from abroad.

Forty-seven of the world's top 100 companies, including Ford, Shell, Hitachi, General Electric, Daimler-Benz, BP, Volkswagen and Unilever, have set up business in Catalonia. Last year they invested about £1.5 billion, an increase of 8.5 per cent on the previous year, and accounted for 24 per cent of Spain's foreign investment.

"It has been one of the main priorities of our Government to attract and facilitate direct foreign investment in Catalonia, and we have built up a network of medium and small companies across a diverse range of economic sectors to supplement it," said Jordi Conejos.

The incentives for foreign investors concern financing: transfer of powers related, for example, to the police, health care, responsibilities for work

supply of component manufacturers and multi-lingual legal and accountancy firms.

"A primary reason for investment of this sort is the high productivity rates that can be achieved," said Jordi Conejos. "Catalonia has a good education system, we maintain high quality technology and business schools."

Four years ago, Hewlett Packard decided to invest in a plant 12 miles outside Barcelona. The most important reason for this decision was the level of education of the labour force, he said.

"Barcelona is not a cheap city, but compared with other European cities we do not have high prices and our amenities are extremely attractive."



The 115,000-seat Nou Camp stadium has a museum housing a large art collection

Winning ways of a football club

FC Barcelona is proud of its professional managers

visit, among other things, the club's fantastic art collection of Barça Foundation.

Barça's Foundation has been presented with 1,400 paintings by artists such as Dalí, Joan Miró, Subirachs, Antoni Tàpies and Antoni Clavé. The only criterion is that the paintings must portray something to do with the club.

Adjoining the foundation is the new VIP lounge which brings in £2.6 million a year from sponsors and has direct access to 700 of the best seats in the 120,000-seat Nou Camp stadium. They have come to

More than 30,000 people have become Barcelona club members since Sr Núñez became chairman, bringing the total to 106,000.

Unlike some British clubs, Barcelona believes it will not have to be floated on the stock exchange. "We can finance ourselves," says Sr Núñez. "Our auditors say we are at just 40 per cent of our possibilities, whereas a club like Manchester United is at 100 per cent of its possibilities."

For example, Barcelona is the only top European club not to have advertising on the

players' shirts, thus forgoing some £2.2 million in revenue. But then, annual sales of souvenir clothing bearing the club logo bring in twice that amount.

Sr Núñez says the main problem of being on the stock exchange is that a club becomes vulnerable. "We would lose our autonomy," he says. "It is unthinkable that Barcelona could be in the hands of a minority group which could dominate the future of our club."

He says Barcelona is determined to break whatever television monopoly may try to emerge during the latest battle in Spain for digital TV services. The club has signed a contract for satellite pay-per-view rights with the local Televisió de Catalunya (TVC) for six years at about £20 million a year.

Sr Núñez's message to struggling clubs is to prize success in management as much as success on the field.



TODAY HE IS CATALAN



One of the most deep-rooted Catalan traditions is spreading throughout the world. In 1995 UNESCO declared April 23rd, St. George's Day, as World Book and Copyright Day. Consequently, we dare to say that even today Shakespeare would feel Catalan. And Molière too. And Goethe, Dante or Borges would also feel Catalan. For many years, Catalonia has celebrated St. George, our patron saint, as Book and

Rose Day. And on this day we all give, to the most dear, a book and a rose, as symbol of culture and of beauty, of reason and emotion, of friendship and love. Catalonia is a country, with 6 million inhabitants, having its proper language, culture and personality within Spain. A progressive Mediterranean country, with a strong

economic development, made up of people with initiative and mentality for the future.

A country that yearly receives more than 16 million visitors and where major foreign businesses invest. A country willing to be one of the motors of Europe. This is yet another indication of Catalonia's international projection. And we are proud, that as of now,

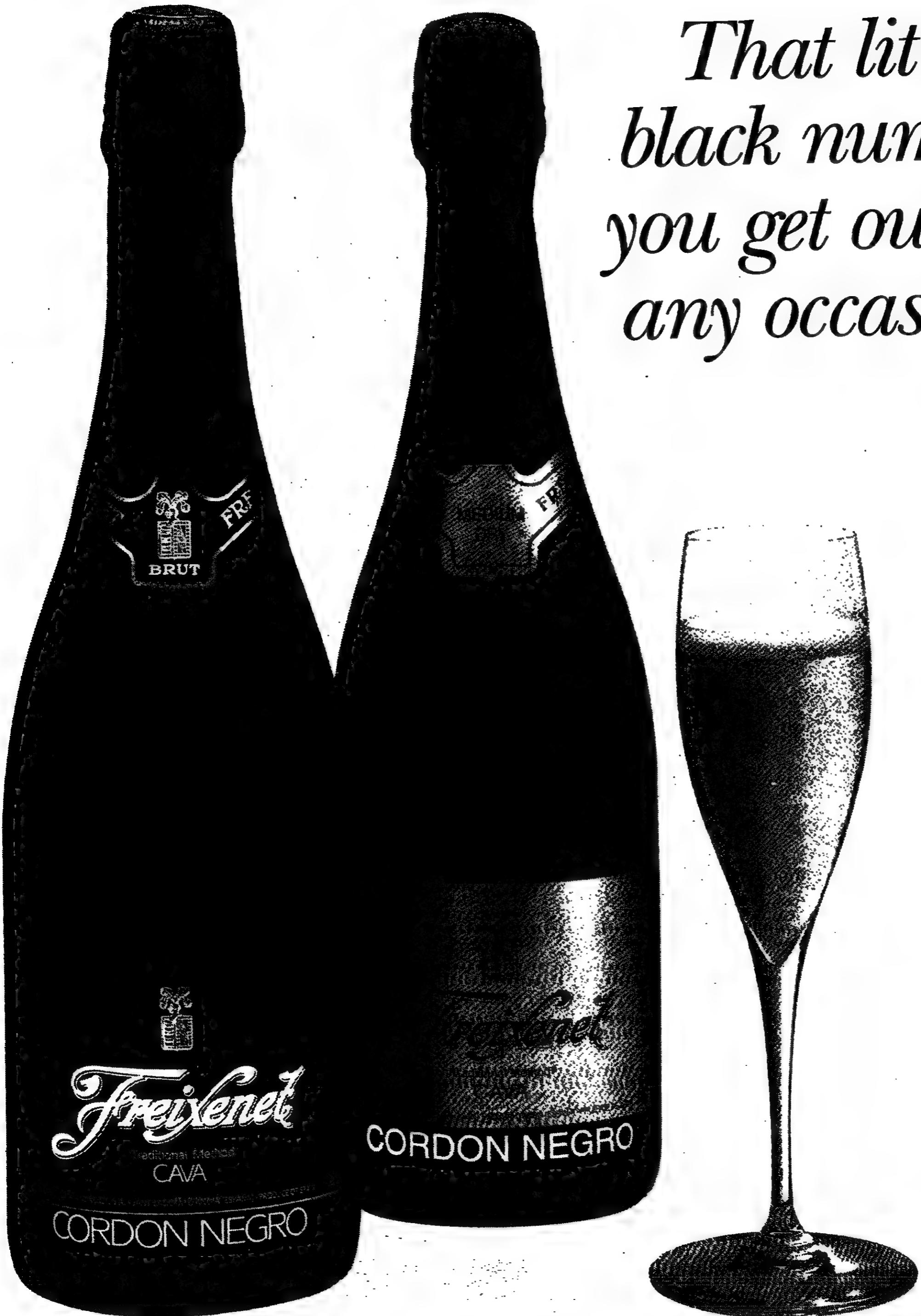
in addition to some of our universally known Catalans such as: Joan Miró, Antoni Gaudí, Antoni Tàpies, Salvador Dalí, Pau Casals, Montserrat Caballé or Josep Carreras, you will also know of some of our customs.



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia

Freixenet

*That little
black number
you get out for
any occasion.*



<http://www.freixenet.com>

Hidden treasures of run-down area

Michael Knipe reports on the progress of revitalising the old economic, social and political heart of Barcelona, one of the largest renewal projects in Europe

As a discordant mixture of flamenco and salsa music blasted across the narrow confines of Carrer de Robador, in the Raval neighbourhood of the Ciutat Vella, the historic old city of Barcelona, half a dozen seedy prostitutes stood languidly in the shade of the charming, but mostly derelict, 18th-century tenement houses.

Some of the once-elegant wrought-iron balconies were draped with a colourful mixture of washing and decorated with plant pots, but there was an overwhelming air of decay. Further down the street, policemen were in the process of making an arrest, but this elicited little general interest.

At night, visitors are advised not to venture into the Raval or Barrio Chino neighbourhood. But this was mid-afternoon, and I was being given a guided tour of what is believed to be the largest urban renewal project of its kind in Europe. Eleven years after it began, the first stage of a comprehensive programme to revitalise

the Ciutat Vella is nearing completion and is widely regarded as a remarkably successful example of urban rejuvenation.

More than 400,000 square metres of land have been expropriated in the Raval district, a quarter of which has been cleared. This work has

The aim has been to reverse the exodus of the middle-income population

affected more than 10 per cent of the old city. More than 4,000 dwellings have been torn down and nearly 2,000 new ones have been built.

However, many of the 19th-century buildings have been saved and carefully restored and, in some cases, are now housing relocated families.

For centuries, Ciutat Vella was the economic, social and political heart of Barcelona, when the famous Ramblas was nothing more than a river bed delineating the outer limits of the 13th-century walls.

Raval, with a population of

100,000, is one of four historic neighbourhoods of the old city.

Located on the right of the Ramblas as you approach the port, opposite the more tourist-friendly Gothic quarter, it was the ecclesiastic sector in the 18th century.

The Ciutat Vella went into decline following the destruction of the city walls in 1856 and the creation of the elegant boulevards of Cerdà's Eixample district. Prosperous traders moved out and the neighbourhood lost its capability to renew itself.

Nearly three quarters of its 70,000 buildings were built before 1900 and suffered slow, but inexorable, degradation. In recent years, the elderly and poor of the Raval neighbourhood have been overshadowed by the drug dealers, addicts, petty thieves and squatters as well as the prostitutes.

In 1979, the first municipal administration to be elected democratically resolved to rehabilitate the worst areas and to create a community-wide system of contacts so that residents could be kept informed of the renovation pro-

gramme. "A primary aim was to maintain the neighbourhood's residential character," says Pasqual Maragall, the mayor, "to keep the people who like to live in the district where they were born and to encourage new people to go and live there, thus reinforcing and regenerating the charac-

teristic social texture." To achieve this, social centres have been built providing sports, playground and health and recreation facilities.

"Ciutat Vella treasures the historic past of Barcelona in its streets and places," says Joan Clos, the deputy mayor. "The centre of a 2,000-year-old city

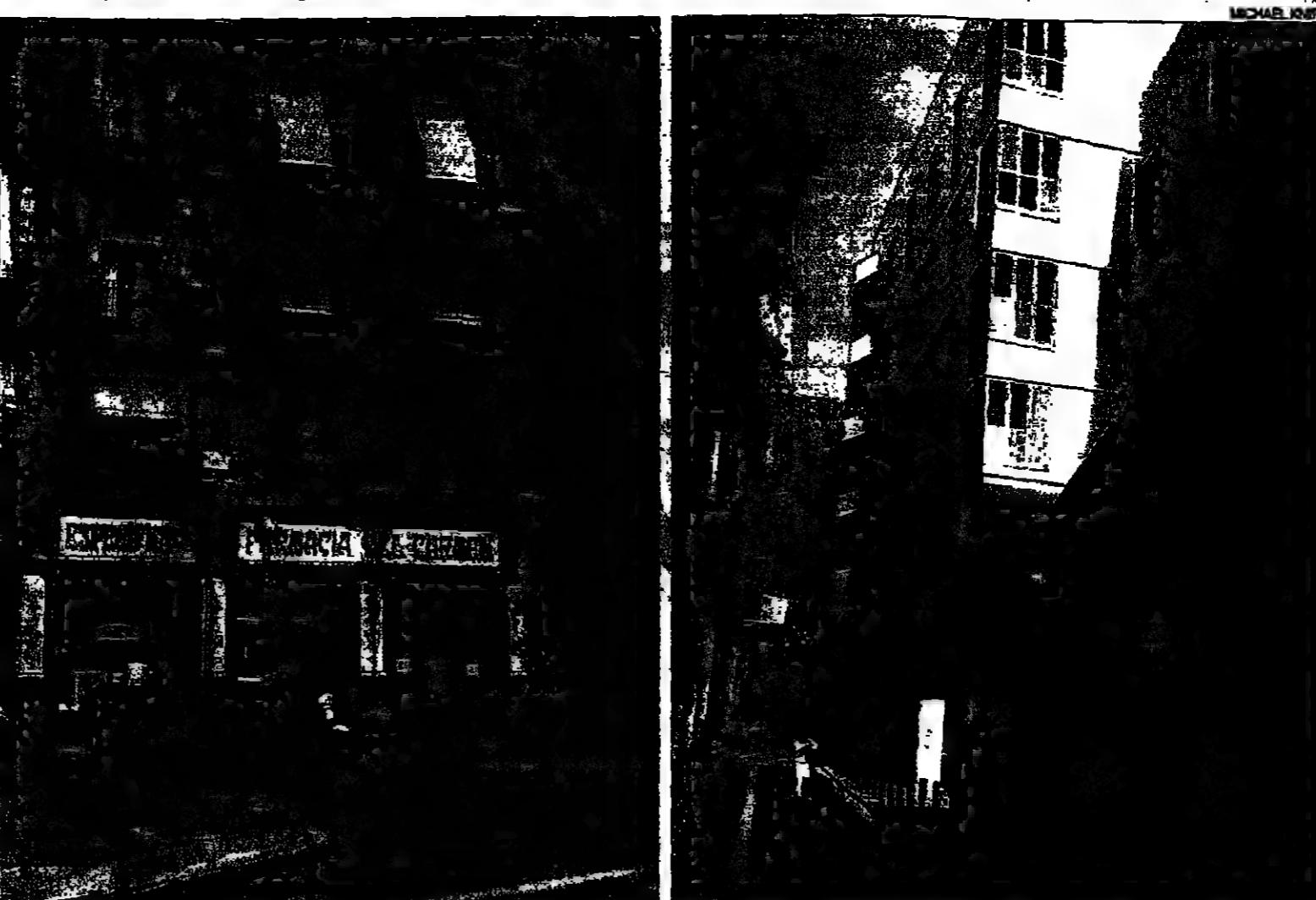
is too valuable to lose or allow to deteriorate. Thus, the redevelopment and revitalisation of Ciutat Vella is a passionate target and a common effort involving all the city."

Public investment in the project has been 100 billion pesetas (about £424 million) and the private sector has

invested 130 billion. In 1994, a further £30 million was obtained from the European Union's Cohesion Fund to complete two specific projects.

"Public-sector investment was designed to stimulate the investment by the private sector and this has proved very successful," says Martí Abella, an architect with Promoció de Ciutat Vella.

"The aim has been to reverse the exodus of the middle-income population and we are achieving this. Public-sector companies are now in the process of moving into the area to open new shops and businesses."



Old and new: some of the better 19th-century buildings have been saved and carefully restored, but many are being demolished and rebuilt

Cable widens phone choice

The region is at the forefront of the telecommunications revolution

THIS summer, work will start on the building of a telecommunications cable network in Catalonia that will be in direct competition with Telefónica, Spain's privatised national telecommunications giant.

A pilot cable network connecting 20,000 homes in Barcelona — set up with the support of the Catalan government against opposition from the central Government in Madrid — is in trial operation.

"This is the only real test of cable technology underway in Spain," says Miquel Puig, secretary-general at Catalonia's Department of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, who is the regional government's telecommunications policy expert.

"The rest of Spain is far behind us. We would like to have a lot of competition in telecommunications in Catalonia and that makes us different from the main trends in the Spanish parliament."

Spain's conservative administration, led by Prime Minister José María Aznar, is liberalising the sector by opening it up to a duopoly, creating a second company controlled by Spanish stockholders.

The former Socialist Government's policy was to protect Telefónica, even though Telefónica itself

We wish to open the frontiers and drop prices'

frontiers and drop prices.

At the moment the telecommunications industry in Spain is settled around Madrid, but the consumer electronics sector is heavily located in Catalonia. If some of the newcomers locate here, it will open up more opportunities.

"We are telling potential investors that Catalonia is the right place from which to enter the Spanish telecommunications market."

MICHAEL KNIPE

Prosperity to flow from rivers project

Mayor envisions World Forum of cultures to celebrate anniversary

I nspired by benefits reaped from the investment in 1992 Olympics, Barcelona is now focusing its attention on staging what it calls a world forum of cultures in the year 2004, Michael Knipe writes.

This date coincides with the 75th anniversary of the Universal Exhibition staged in Barcelona in 1929. "The objective is to bring together all the world's cultures at the same time," says Pasqual Maragall, the mayor of Barcelona.

The idea has been developed by a group of the city's municipal advisers and experts, many of whom helped organise the Olympic Games. Senior Maragall is now lobbying for international support for the project, particularly from Unesco.

Joan Clos, the deputy mayor, says the forum will be used to develop Barcelona's two

SUPPORT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

CENTRAL RAVEL DISTRICT PROJECT (12.12.1994 European Commission decision)

Budget: 8,855 million pesetas

Amount funded by the European Union: 85% (8,277 M.Pta.)

CASCANTIC (Old Quarter) PROJECT (12.12.94 European Commission decision)

Budget: 2,055 million pesetas

Amount funded by the European Union: 80% (1,644 M.Pta.)



Before

- Urban density problem that caused unhealthy living conditions: lack of fresh air, sunshine and space
- Anachronistic and insufficient infrastructures and services
- As a result: deficient quality of life for the area's residents

Execution:



Promoció de Ciutat Vella, S.A.

Project and Management:

District de Ciutat Vella

- Lots have been freed, achieving open spaces that let in sunshine and fresh air
- Two new streets have been created
- Two new plazas have been created
- Ten streets have been renovated
- Utility infrastructures have been modernised: water, gas, telephone, electricity
- By improving the quality of life, economic and social inequalities have been alleviated

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE



■ OPERA

Taking Covent Garden to the people: Genista McIntosh offers a blueprint for popularity



■ VISUAL ART

Oxford's Moma traces the ambiguous relationship between the camera and reality

THE TIMES ARTS



■ POP

The imitable Billy Bragg takes to the road with songs, quips — and a dash of politics



■ TOMORROW

Rising sons: Seiji Ozawa prepares to dazzle Britain with Japan's premier orchestra

Can her Garden bloom?

Genista McIntosh, the new chief executive of the Royal Opera House, knows that she has an Everest to climb, as she tells **Rodney Milnes**

Horticulturalists will tell you that "genista" is not quite the same thing as broom, and anyway the new broom at the Royal Opera House solves the problem by being known as Jenny. She doesn't seem at all like your traditional opera house general director, which is maybe why she chose the title of chief executive. She is soft-spoken, she thinks before and while she speaks, and although she doesn't shoot from the hip, you may be sure there's a pretty pearl-handled revolver somewhere about her person for emergency use.

She has done top administrative jobs at both the National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company, and earned a formidable reputation for vision, clarity of thought and decisiveness. All of those qualities are desperately needed by the soon-to-be peripatetic ROH companies.

One difference from the RNT and RSC is that there are thousands of opera-buffs convinced that they can do the job better ("the letters I get are quite interesting", she says drily) and she has already been struck by the proprietorial attitude of ROH audiences. "That's touching, but also disconcerting; people have this profound attachment to everything that happens here, and they feel deeply affronted or deeply thrilled in ways that I haven't encountered in any other audience."

She is in no doubt about the challenge of the job. The first TV documentary about her predecessor, Jeremy Isaacs, was titled *The Poisoned Chalice*. "When I took the job I referred to it in those terms, and the person to whom I was speaking said: 'Well, I don't see much sign of a chalice'. Which didn't comfort me." So why take it on? "It's a bit like Everest. You try to match yourself against something slightly beyond your reach."

Her first four months have been spent ensuring that the ROH stays alive during closure. "Everything hangs on our surviving in reasonably good shape. Only then can we start making the right preparations for returning to the new theatre in 1999. The next task is to decide what it wants to be when it returns, how much should be retained, how much changed. The new building is a clear metaphor,"

Our new building will in many ways become a metaphor

because you have the old theatre, refurbished but essentially still itself, and around it new buildings implying modernity, openness and flexibility. If the organisation doesn't change itself in comparable ways, an opportunity will have been lost."

She also sees abundant opportunities both for attracting new audiences in the closure period and for starting to turn around the ROH's currently disastrous "exclusive" image. "You can't be grand in the Shafesbury or the Barbican, because all sorts of different things go on there. For heaven's sake, the Shafesbury is currently showing *Sinderella*, and I think there's something quite salutary about the Royal Opera going to a theatre that can also present that, or the Royal Ballet going to Labatt's Apollo following Cliff Richard. It shows that there isn't that much of a gap. It's a good opportunity, provided that the audience that goes to see, well, perhaps not *Sinderella*, but things you might expect to see at the Barbican will also come to see us. We will do all we can to persuade them. That's how you turn an image round."

New audiences may be attracted by seat prices half those charged at the ROH, but will they be retained when the companies move back and prices return to "normal"? Will they return to normal? "I hope that there will be a price structure making more seats available at prices comparing favourably with those that people expect to pay for opera elsewhere. This is not to say that we will suddenly find funds enabling us to reduce prices. We will have to be clever, making it appear, no, making it a reality that people who can afford £50 but cannot afford £150 should be able to come more often."

Those temporarily favourable prices have been achieved with co-operation from the Arts Council, and at a time when ROH and AC seem to be at each other's throats. McIntosh takes pains to stress how helpful Great Peter Street has been. "We're all in the same boat, and there's nothing to be gained from funders and funded not making common cause. It's in the interests of everybody, and of the ROH in particular, that relations with the body that provides more than £14 million of funding



Genista McIntosh: comes with a formidable reputation for vision, clarity of thought and decisiveness

each year should be cordial."

McIntosh knows the Arts Council's ways and its language, and with luck the amazing scenes shown in the TV documentary *The House* will not be repeated.

With sharp-eyed realism, she sees no prospect of any change in government funding policy, whatever happens next week. "The lottery has changed the climate. People believe that the problem of funding the arts has been solved. In a way it has, in that there is a lot of money around. What hasn't been solved is what to do with it. What will not happen is more funds from Treasury sources. That would not be politically acceptable to any government. So we have to hope that figures from the Treasury don't get worse,

and develop imaginative new schemes to allow the flow of money into art-forms rather than buildings."

There is no question of her hankering after the old "welfare state whingeing" days of funding. She recognises that this is a time of change. "It's not all for the worse, but some of it is, and we have to live with it. There are so many ways in which money available to the arts can be spent that it gets harder to justify huge amounts being diverted to institutions like us. But there will always be a place for organisations that exemplify the best."

And "the best" is what her vision of the ROH entails. "It's not the best, then we're not doing it right; it's our only justification."

VISUAL ART: Isabel Carlisle on a revealing exhibition of photography

How we've all been framed

As the arts and sciences pursue their divergent paths in this information age, an exhibition in Oxford shows photography as the enduring meeting place for the two. Prints by photographers from the middle of the 19th century to the present day, linked by a common interest in making sense of the world around them, have been grouped around different themes such as the museum; disease and madness; and origins: myths and narratives.

In the middle of the last century, the premise that the camera does not lie underpins its use as a scientific tool. Yet the conventions observed in composing the photos of natural objects of people of different races, of exhibits in museums, had their origins in Western art.

Photography took over the role of prints and drawings as the tool for creating a "museum without walls". It was just the tool the Victorians needed to come to grips with Darwin and his theories of evolution. Eadweard Muybridge's freeze-frame studies of naked men and women as they move through the balletic complexity of an everyday movement such as going up and down stairs are part of this need to analyse.

The significance that photography gives to the every-



Art meets science: anonymous nude, taken in 1870
day by plucking it out of context and putting a frame around it reinforces the isolation of objects in museums. Photographs of Greek statues by Roger Fenton (1850-57) are at two removes from their origins. Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden's semi-pornographic shots of young naked boys

ano's altarpiece, sets up more complicated resonances of a frame within a frame.

When we reach the fusing of 18 photos of criminals in an attempt to pin-point the essence of criminality, we are back with photography as a scientific probe.

The end of the attempt to analyse human psychology with the lens of a camera is signalled by Christian Boltanski's Archives of 1989. The assembled photos, cut from the pages of a French weekly specialising in crime reports, give no clue as to who is aggressor, who victim: anyone can become a player in a drama of life and death.

The camera finds its way into situations that a pen or paintbrush would rarely confront: the murder scene, the lunatic asylum, the morgue, the sexual act. Its probing gaze tackles issues in ways that are shockingly frank yet result in images that are as ambiguous as a drawing or a painting.

In this overview of how photography has shaped the way we look at the world, it becomes clear that the tradition of Western image-making still has a powerful hold.

• In Visible Light: Photography and Classification in Art, Science and the Everyday, sponsored by Oxford University Press, is at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford (01865 728608), until July 6

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

THE TIMES

An unmissable West End theatre offer



The Times Live is a new entertainment service in association with First Call, the leading ticketing agency, which offers readers priority bookings, special offers and discounted tickets on a range of live events — from pop to classical concerts, opera to ballet, theatre and sporting events.

To launch this service we have negotiated a special West End Theatre package exclusive to *Times* readers. When you buy two top price tickets for either *Miss Saigon*, *Cats*, *Martin Guerre* or *Oliver!*, *Times* will give you two top price tickets for a second show of your choice, from the four featured here, in exchange

for five *Times* tokens.

Tickets are available throughout May and June for: *Miss Saigon* (Mon-Thurs 7.45pm & Tue matinees 3pm); *Martin Guerre* (Mon-

Thurs 7.45pm & Thurs matinees 3pm); *Cats* (Mon-Thurs 7.45pm & Tues matinees 3pm) and *Oliver!* (Mon-Thurs 7.30pm & Wed matinees 2.30pm). Prices are £32.50 each plus a £2.50 booking fee per ticket.

To apply, collect five differently numbered tokens from *The Times* this week and send them, with the application form which will appear on Friday and your payment to: *The Times* Live, West End Theatre Offer, P O Box 92, London, WC2H 9SU. Applications must arrive no later than Friday, May 2. Offer subject to availability.

• See *The Times* 16-page guide to this summer's entertainment free with Monday's paper for more special offers and discounted tickets. If you did not receive your copy please call 0171-481 3355.



CHOICE 1
Kathryn Hunter joins a strong cast for Lorca's *Doña Rosita*

VENUE: Now in preview at the Almeida Theatre



CHOICE 2
Libor Pešek conducts the RLPO on a visit to London

VENUE: Tonight at the Barbican

THE ARTS



CHOICE 3
The spirit of Kenneth Williams is evoked in a fine one-man show

VENUE: This week at the Komedia, Brighton



DANCE
Madrid's Ballet Comunidad reveals magnificent performers in choreography of variable quality

LONDON

BAILEGANGAIRE: Welcome revival of Tom Murphy's most popular play where the author's son, Michael, and his daughter (Gard Brannan, Ruth McCabe) in surprise, return to the heart of a tale of duane tragedy? Royal Court, Upstairs, the Old Vic, Covent Garden, West Street, WC2 (0171-565 5000). Open: 10pm, 7pm, Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat from May 31-4pm.

DONA ROSITA: Phoebe Nicholls plays the patient Spanish pianist hopeful of love, while her son (John Duttine), Kenneth Hunter, Celia Imrie, Kerry Shale, Chay Siviter also feature in *Phyllida*. Almeida Theatre, Seven Dials, WC2 (0171-404 1250). Preview: 2pm, tonight, 7.30pm, April 27. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 3pm until June 7.

100 ARTISTS: A large-scale exhibition of 350 paintings and drawings by students and postgraduates on the final year of the course at the Royal College of Art, Burlington House, St George's Street, WC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7pm-10pm.

ELSEWHERE

BRIGHTON: Returns only for the evening's performance of *Think No Evil of Us! My Life with Kenneth Williams*.

WORCESTER: David Banton's solo show is part biography, part autobiography.

MANCHESTER: *Stargazing* by Carolyn Salter in the little roles.

THEATRE ROYALE HULL: Kurt Nikkanen joins the orchestra for Brahms's Violin Concerto, St George's Hall, Broadlands Rd, Hull (0171-332 9001). Tonight, 7.15pm; mat Sat, 2.15pm; Sun, 2pm.

EDINBURGH: Edinburgh Festival (0131-329 8000). Friday 30 and May 3.

BRISTOL: The final concert in the Bristol City Chamber's Schubert Bicentenary Series is also the second in a series of annual concerts given on St George's Day to celebrate the life of Franz Schubert, founder of the St George's Music Trust. Schubert's "Trout" Piano Quintet is given one

TODAY'S CHOICE
A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Mawby

of the RLPO brings to a close his ten-year association with the orchestra. In honour of his 20th anniversary, Schubert's "Trout" and "Death and the Maiden" will be performed.

WEDNESDAY

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PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA: Peter Pyle's first season as music director, principal conductor and artistic adviser

A BRIGHT FRIENDS: Revival of Ayckbourn's comedy, the one about Colin whose friends are determined to comfort him in his grief, except that he doesn't want them to do so much as they do. At Ayckbourn's Theatre Royal, Greenwich, Croxley Green, SE10 (0181-258 7755). Preview: begins tonight, 7.30pm; mat Sat from June 7.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

Jonathan Miller's *Antony and Cleopatra*

Emmerson plays the isolated lover in

Brindisi, Bridge Lane, EC4 (0171-906 8595). Preview: 7pm, mat Sat, 4.30pm. Until May 3.

CLOUD NINE: Tom Cairns directs Cary Churchill's first (1979) smash hit about political and sexual malaise, set in a small town in America. At the Old Vic, Waterloo Road, SE1 (0171-928 7659). Tonight, 7.30pm. In rep.

LADY IN THE DARK: The 1941 musical by Moss Hart, Ira Gershwin and Kurt Weill. A fashion editor (Mona Freeman) visits her psychiatrist to talk of dreams about three men. Directed by Peter Zobel, best known for his work in opera.

National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (0171-223 2232). Tonight-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2pm. In rep.

LADY WIMBLEDON'S FAN

Braham Murray's production of Wilde

down from Manchester for a ten-week season. Gabourey Drake plays the woman with the part, Rebecca Johnson, the virtuous wife, without a mother.

At the Royal Exchange, Manchester, St Georges Square, SW1 (0171-929 8891). Preview: begins tonight, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 4pm and 8pm.

LONG RUNNERS

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged): Criterion (0171-889 8891). An Inspector Calls: Gielgud Theatre (0171-494 5089).

Les Misérables: Palace (0171-434 0269).

Oliver! (0171-229 1221). UCI Whitley Bay (0906 260 0000). Virgin Galatic Road (0171-929 9000).

Outcry: Peacock Theatre (0171-447 5400).

Richard III: Lyceum (0171-494 5403).

Starlight Express: Apollo Victoria (0171-737 2281). The Woman in Black: Fortune (0171-638 2281).

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

THEATRE GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated by the symbol +) on video across the country

Curzon West End (0171-399 1722)

+ Fox's *Box Office* (0171-399 2233)

NOTTING HILL (1996)

Macmillan (0171-399 4315) Soho

Regent (0171-727 0787) Notting Hill

Screen (0171-252 0505) Old Vic

Shakespeare's Globe (0171-251 2717)

South Bank (0171-223 2232)

Southwark Playhouse (0171-437 4343)

Star (0171-437 4343)

Strand (0171-252 0000)

Swing (0171-252 0000)

Tabard Inn (0171-252 0000)

Tele (0171-252 0000)

Thames (0171-252 0000)

Whitechapel (0171-252 0000)

West End (0171-252



■ THEATRE 1
Brecht is well served by an in-the-round staging of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* at the Olivier



■ THEATRE 2
Lavatorial humour but little terror remains in the Gate's version of *King Ubu*

THE ARTS



■ THEATRE 3
Find Me proves to be an unsatisfactory attempt to delve into the minds of the unstable



■ RISING STAR
Holly Slater is that rare thing: a woman tenor saxophonist, and one who also gets rave notices

THEATRE: Brecht on the South Bank, Père Ubu loses his barbs, Shakespeare at the gallop and confusion in the asylum

Morality played for our times

The large circle which is now the Olivier stage is not chalk, but shiny black something or other. With purple seats rising round it and grey plaster and silver feet hovering above it, the amphitheatre looks like a giant flying saucer I felt I was about to be transported by aliens — for, after all, little is more alien to Olivier tradition than the rough-theatre style associated with Simon McBurney's Theatre de Complicite, and nothing more alien to 1990s Britain than Brecht's communist ideology.

Well I was transported, but in a wholly benign way. As McBurney himself is in control, simplicity and Complice turn out to suit Brecht's story very well, and even those who object to the play's drab prologue and didactic thrust must admit that Brecht was a born storyteller. Derived from a 13th-century Chinese play and the biblical judgment of Solomon, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* has the magic of folk legend, yet as up-to-date as the Baby M case our era's other querrels about the nature of parenthood.

If the potente wife who abandons her baby in her haste to keep her chic dresses out of rebel hands is a caricature, well, so is the evil queen in my fairy-tale. What matters is that kitchen maid who rescues the children, death and faces danger and diversity in protecting him should not be too much a Cinderella or Snow White parody. But with Julie Stevenson in the role, that is not a problem. Although her Grusha gets less princess-looking as the evening bang along, she never loses an undivided, pinched look and, although her maternal rage is undeniably moving, there is nothing sentimental about her. Her heroism is always grittily unheroic.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Likewise with McBurney, who plays Azak, the judge who adjudicates between her and her one-time employer. With his loopy, goony looks and scarecrow jacket, he is in no danger of dwindling from a sly, subversive maverick into a lovable clown. And, as director, he jogs you into believing that a pillow is an infant, a bicycle wheel a coach and poles everything from swords to waves to the struts of the perilous bridge over which Grusha edges.

Your imagination will happily follow McBurney's hints, but your intellect may carp at his opening. Should he have cut the prologue, in which villagers argue about whether a valley should be reclaimed by goat-breeders or used to irrigate a fruit-growing collective? Brecht felt it showed the contemporary relevance of a play that suggested that rights should be earned rather than inherited, and that property belongs to those who use it best.

But directors have tended to ditch the prologue, in my view rightly. Doesn't it particularise and limit the resonance of the long parable that follows? Or, if we must be particular, aren't the play's obvious implications more to the point in our post-socialist world? Foster, adoptive or step-parents sometimes have a better claim to children than "biological parents". Nurture sometimes outranks nature. That is a provocative enough thought for today.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Balancing act: Juliet Stevenson, as Grusha, crosses the bridge — "Her heroism is always grittily unheroic"

Rapid eye movement made flesh

"KEEP moving! Keep moving!" must have been the instruction from Niall Henry when directing Blue Raincoat's new version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. His actors usually obey, and for two hours they spin, slide, crawl, climb and dance their way round the carefully emptied performance space at the Factory.

Blue Raincoat produce a strain theatre that seems to work, to a large extent, under the shadow of Peter Brook. His influence extends not just through their heavily choreo-

graphed performance style, the bare performance space, or the odd loony grin, but also to the choice of material.

Shakespeare's comedy must offer every small, independent company a pleasant image of itself projected through time. Give or take a few hundred years and a couple of Arts Council grants, Blue Raincoat might have been the play's band of strolling performers, living from show to show, offering their work too generously to an audience that might easily prove fickle and uninterested.

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Sligo

The current production follows this cue by putting the emphasis on the roughness of its magic, leaving props and scenery at a minimum (although the glorious junk shop of costumes by Mudita Proctor adds sparkle) and forcing the actors to burn every available calorie summoning up Shakespeare's dreams. From the opening scene the stage is full of action, as though Henry intended to balance the flow of words with an equally intricate pattern of movements.

While all members of the cast are kept busy — they never leave the stage and most play several roles — there are some strikingly charismatic performances.

Fiona McKeown's Puck is a bright thread to sew the play's interwoven mini-plots together. Her movements constantly evoke the metaphor of the needle and thread as she winds herself around props and other actors with equal lithe ness. Brendan Ellis is inspiringly regal, with just a suspicion of ironic detachment as Theseus, and with the aid of a red nose equally convincing as a stoutly neurotic Quince.

Henry's production offers a convincing account of Shakespeare's comedy, finding contemporary resonance without recourse to any stiffing "updating", and giving the play a bright glow of energy. For the company to maintain this level of physical exertion for the length of its forthcoming tour, however, will require immense resources of old-fashioned craft.

LUKE CLANCY

Truth unadored

Find Me
Pentameters, NW3

one's teeth on edge. By the time we get to the Taylors' fireworks party with Verity aged 11, bouncing off the walls with shrill over-excitement, we are deep in migraine territory. Like Verity what I really needed was tablets; in her case treatment for probable manic depression.

The parents, sympathetically portrayed by Wymark, appear to be doing the decent thing by having her committed to a mental asylum. There is one magical chorus of female whispers, where Verity's thoughts are handed, like a baton, around the five female actresses play Verity, from the age of four to the day she was incarcerated.

A small lifetime of hyperactivity, epilepsy and bullying is whisked by us like so much freight. The company of eight (including three males), dressed in brown shirts, skirts, belts and chinos, frogmarch us through her years at school, the screaming fits, the embarrassing visit to a French restaurant, and the social torture she inflicts on her desperate parents.

But otherwise Clive Perrott's production is an assault course. By continually shuffling the parts of mother, father and brothers around the rest of the cast he throws away the chance of any contrasting consistency. Ultimately, the only thing that does sustain our interest is the fact that it is based on a true story. Sad though that story is, it is simply not enough.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
HOLLY SLATER

Age 24.

Profession: Saxophonist.
The rare creature, a female tenor player? Yes, and a god one: last year she won the "Louis" award at the fully-named Royal Sun Alliance Young Jazz Musician of the Year.

What is she going to take on to Big Apple, then? She surely has. She's just played a five-night stint at the Fish Blue Note club in Greenwich Village.

Our very own John Coltrane in the making? That's one influence, but she's more attracted to players of the older school. She particularly likes the swagger and balladry of Dexter Gordon.

Was she singing *Lullaby of Birdland* in the cradle? Not quite. She says she only became truly serious about jazz "about three years ago". What attracted her most of all was the freedom: "It's probably the most creative art form of the lot, because you can do just about anything."

Academic credentials: A jazz and popular music degree at Middlesex University. A friend encouraged her to apply for a study period in the US, and she spent the whole of her second year at William Patterson College in New Jersey, studying under the veteran jazzman Rufus Reid.

What fun? "I'd spend the day at college, and drive into New York with friends around 11pm to hear music in the clubs. We'd normally get back at 3am; I'd go to a diner for breakfast, then go straight off to classes."

Sounds tiring: "There's so much going on over there that I've nearly stayed." After finishing her degree, she went on teaching, but threw herself into a full-time music career after winning her regional heat of the Louis awards.

Back to reality: True, jazz is no way to become an overnight celebrity. But Slater has already worked with the red-hot African singer Dennis Rowland this year, and she'll be appearing at Ronnie Scott's club next month. A record is on the way too, based on her last visit to the Frith Street venue.

CLIVE DAVIS



The harsh lighting and close quarters of this most spartan of fringe productions puts

the performers on edge. By the time we get to the Taylors' fireworks party with Verity aged 11, bouncing off the walls with shrill over-excitement, we are deep in migraine territory. Like Verity what I really needed was tablets; in her case treatment for probable manic depression.

The parents, sympathetically portrayed by Wymark, appear to be doing the decent thing by having her committed to a mental asylum. There is one magical chorus of female whispers, where Verity's thoughts are handed, like a baton, around the five female actresses play Verity, from the age of four to the day she was incarcerated.

A small lifetime of hyperactivity, epilepsy and bullying is whisked by us like so much freight. The company of eight (including three males), dressed in brown shirts, skirts, belts and chinos, frogmarch us through her years at school, the screaming fits, the embarrassing visit to a French restaurant, and the social torture she inflicts on her desperate parents.

But otherwise Clive Perrott's production is an assault course. By continually shuffling the parts of mother, father and brothers around the rest of the cast he throws away the chance of any contrasting consistency. Ultimately, the only thing that does sustain our interest is the fact that it is based on a true story. Sad though that story is, it is simply not enough.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Toilet talk at the dinner table

King Ubu
Gate

bunqueting table. This is subsequently stripped to reveal gratings every yard or so, up from which characters pop and into which they tumble.

Wright finds other uses for these as well: when the hapless Dogpile (Fraser Corby) is sentenced to the rack, his feet emerge at increasing distances from his body. But while the sense of outrageous behaviour taking place inches from your eyes on dinner tables is appropriate to the



Ubus: Stephen Finegold (left) and Joanna Holden

play, its two dimensions (on top and underneath) eventually become a confinement.

Stephen Finegold's Ma Ubu, dispensing Ugly Sister courtesy when not rolling up the character's terrible breasts, conveys something of the play's thuggery, and Joanna Holden's pot-bellied Pa manages to be venomously alarming when lavatorial. But for a play that can be presented as a savage political fable, the grimmer qualities seem not to have been sought.

JEREMY KINGSTON

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

Win tickets to the show

COSMOPOLITAN

EARLS COURT 2 LONDON

The Times has linked up with The Cosmopolitan Show to offer you an evening of glamour and excitement at their Gala Charity Preview evening on May 1. The star-filled event will feature the finals of the

Cosmopolitan-Storm model competition, fashion shows featuring top models (including Sophie Anderton), designers and — live on stage — Louise (ex-Eternal).

The Cosmopolitan Show will be at Earls Court 2 from May 2-5 with four days of non-stop activities, shopping and entertainment. The show features top hair and make-up artists including Nicky Clarke and Chase Aston, leading designer fashion on a dual runway catwalk (shows running every hour on the hour). Plus the latest health, fitness and lifestyle trends and a chance to meet the team behind Britain's bestselling young women's magazine. Tickets for the Gala evening, in aid of the Breast Cancer Campaign, cost £10 and £5 of every ticket sold goes to the charity. Tickets for the Cosmopolitan Show between May 2-5 are just £8 in advance and, if you buy three, you get a fourth one free. Call the ticket hotline on 0990 205 205.

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Call our hotline before midnight, Wednesday April 23, with your answer to this question:

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Julie Green,
Area Sales
Secretary & Personnel
Consultant

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Bright lights, big opportunity

Susan MacDonald on the City's demand for tough young go-getters

High-flying secretary wanted to work with City whiz-kids. £20,000 plus mortgage subsidy, paid O/T, subsidised restaurant, gym, NC pension, health, life, Bupa, subsidised loans and bonus." Or "Second secretary City: £14,000 + bens. Fantastic opportunity for a young secretary to kick-start career in the City."

Advertisements such as these appear often in *The Times* and other broadsheet newspapers. Do they make you drool with longing to work in the Square Mile, or do you feel there must be drawbacks? Large recruitment agencies agree that the City is buoyant, that financial institutions are desperate to find good secretaries, PAs and support staff and that the salaries, bonuses and benefits offered are high enough to change your life-style. But they also agree that banks are looking for outgoing, bright people, preferably in their twenties, who will not suffer greatly because of the amount of time and energy they will be expected to dedicate to their job.

For those seeking top earnings who do not mind working long hours at high speed,

banking is the place to be. Working for City property and insurance companies does not put secretaries on the same financial level. They can be fun to work for but the salaries are not so enticing, the benefits not so good and there could be a heavy amount of audio typing, according to Debbie Burke of Roc Recruitment.

Ms Burke says that demand far outstrips supply because City banks like secretaries who already have banking experience. "We get fabulous secretaries in here, with excellent skills and qualifications, who want to get in to the City. One of the best ways to do this, if they have no banking experience, is to work in the corporate finance area. This entails working all hours, sometimes for several teams, and being between 22 and 28 years old. But it is a way in, once in, a way up."

Some City banks ask for A levels or degrees, but mainly it is experience they are looking for. Speeds and good shorthand are still important and having top-level computer skills is paramount. In fact City secretaries need it all — skills, presentation, education and a smart appearance. "We know the right people as soon



As business booms in the Square Mile, the rewards for top secretaries keep growing

as we see them. We call them 'walkers' because they can walk in the door and walk our again with a job."

Tara Ricks of Joslin Rowe recruitment consultants agrees that demand for secretaries is exceeding supply in the City because businesses are expanding. Joslin Rowe's figures show an increase in demand of 20 per cent in the first quarter of this year. "City banking institutions cover Europe, America and Asia, so there is a lot of overtime

involved, but it is a meritocratic environment and the opportunities are great," she says.

The role of the secretary has changed enormously. "Secretaries and PAs are no longer seen as second-class citizens — there are more graduate secretaries now," Ms Ricks says. "Gone are the days of sitting at a desk, typing; these City secretarial and support staff jobs entail initiative, decision making and responsibility for project work."

Bea Francis of DTA Bilin-

gual, who specialise in placing secretaries with languages in City jobs, says: "Secretaries must be dynamic and bubbly or they won't stand a chance. Many banks need foreign languages at bilingual or trilingual standard. Secretaries will not get paid extra for their languages, but they will get jobs because of them."

"Ninety-nine per cent of our placements are graduates, many with a degree in modern languages. City jobs are great for people who need to be

challenged constantly and would be bored stiff otherwise."

About 95 per cent of City secretaries are female, but recruitment agencies say the few men they have on their books are very good at their jobs and often work their way upwards.

Claire Ashley of Crome Corkill, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this week, is more optimistic about the chances of secretaries without financial backgrounds getting City jobs. She says that secretarial roles have changed dramatically in the four years she has been working in the company's City office, and that opportunities for advancement — especially for graduates — are far greater.

Bright young things are still much in demand, she says, "but now banks are taking on secretaries over 30, when the extra years mean more banking experience and greater computer literacy."

"Salaries and benefits are as good as ever — average benefits can amount to between £3,000 and £4,000 a year, not including bonuses. Many secretaries who are thinking of moving jobs are having their salaries tipped in a bid to keep them. This means young secretaries can get into the City through temping, but older ones still need banking experience."



Candidates Eileen Gordon, left, and Clare Whelan

Politics beckons MPs' employees

LIKE many secretaries before them, Eileen Gordon and Clare Whelan have looked at what their boss does and thought "I can do that." And come May 2, the news they would both like to hear is that they will soon be joining their erstwhile employers in Parliament. Eileen Fursland writes.

Eileen, 50, has spent the past seven years working for Tony Banks, who was the Labour MP for Newham, east London. She is standing for Labour in Romford, Essex.

Clare Whelan, 41, is the Conservative candidate for West Lewisham in south London, and has worked for Edwina Currie since

1989, just after she resigned as a minister from Mrs Thatcher's Government.

They each have a daughter and a son: Whelan's are 11 and 14, Gordon's 18 and 21. Both feel strongly that there should be more women in Parliament.

Ms Gordon was a teacher until she became Tony Banks's secretary. "Politics has always been part of my life, so this is an ideal job for me."

Ms Whelan, too, has been a political animal all along. "I am a local councillor, so I already had some idea of how politics worked," she says.

Both women say that their experience helped them to get selected.

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Law Report April 23 1997 Queen's Bench Division

Pension transfer caught by tax

Regina v Inland Revenue Commissioners, Ex Parte Roux Waterside Inn Ltd
Before Mr Justice Tucker
[Judgment April 8]

Arrangements made to transfer funds out of one pension scheme into a new one so as to avoid the restrictions on the ways pension benefits could be taken fell within the tax avoidance principles laid down by the House of Lords in *Ramsay (W. T.) Ltd v IRC* [1982] AC 300 and justified the Inland Revenue's decision to exercise its discretion under section 59(8) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 to withdraw approval of the old scheme and to raise an assessment on the trustees under section 59(1C) of the Act.

Mr Justice Tucker so held in a reserved judgment in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing an application by Roux Waterside Inn Ltd for judicial review of the Revenue's decision of January 2, 1996, to withdraw approval from the Roux Waterside Inn Ltd Retirement Benefit Scheme for the purposes of Chapter 1 of Part XIV of the 1988 Act.

Section 59(8) of the 1988 Act, inserted by section 36(1) of the Finance Act 1991, provides: "(1) If in the opinion of the Board the facts concerning any approved scheme or its administration cause to warrant the continuance of their approval of the scheme they may at any time by notice to the administrator withdraw their ap-

proval on such grounds, and from such date... as may be specified in the notice."

Section 59(1C), inserted by section 6(1) of the Finance Act 1995, provides: "(1) Where an approval of a scheme to which this section applies ceases to have effect, tax shall be charged... (2)... at the rate of 40 per cent on an amount equal to the value of the assets which immediately before the date of the cessation of the approval of the scheme are held for the purposes of the scheme (taking that value as it stands immediately before that date)."

In 1988 the old pension scheme had been established solely for the benefit of Mr Michel Roux, who effectively controlled the applicant company, and his wife, Mrs Robyn Roux. The arrangements were entered into so that Mr Roux's interest in the old scheme could be transferred into a new scheme for which Revenue approval would initially be sought but which would be altered on the date of transfer in such a way as to become incapable of approval. The purpose was to extract the value of Mr Roux's benefit from the old scheme so as to avoid the restrictions on the way in which pension benefits could be taken.

MR JUSTICE TUCKER said that the question was not purely one of administration of the old scheme. The Revenue was entitled to look at the broad facts and consider the purpose for which the old scheme had been used.

Mr Andrew Thornhill, QC and Mr Jeremy Woolf for the applicant; Mr Launcelot Henderson, QC and Mr Timothy Brennan for the trustees.

The applicant contended that the question was one of administration where being nothing about the administration of the old scheme which could have caused it to lose approval, the trustees having acted properly and in accordance with the obligations imposed on them by the Pensions Schemes Act 1993 when making the transfer.

It was regrettable that Mrs Roux should be affected by the decision, but her interest was a minor one and could not be a compelling reason for altering the transfer.

Solicitors: Mr Ian Alton: Solicitor of Inland Revenue.

Contract terminated before work started

Sarker v South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Before Mr Justice Keene, Mr L D. Cowan and Ms B. Switzer
[Judgment March 25]

Where a person had contracted to work for an employer but the contract was terminated before she commenced work, the industrial tribunal had jurisdiction to hear her claim for breach of contract.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal so held in allowing an appeal by the applicant, Ms Borsita Ajanta Sarker, from the decision of an industrial tribunal at Newcastle upon Tyne, dated March 29, 1996, that it did not have jurisdiction to determine the applicant's claim against the respondent, South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, under section 31 of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 and article 3 of the Industrial Tribunals Extension of Jurisdiction (England and Wales) Order (SI 1994 No 1633).

The applicant in person: Mr K. J. Fletcher, solicitor, for the respondent.

MR JUSTICE KEENE said that in July 1996 the applicant was offered the post of an ultrasound

manager with the respondent trust, which she duly accepted. On August 25 the trust sent a formal letter of appointment, to which particulars of employment were attached, confirming a start date of October 1, 1995.

The particulars required the applicant to give two months' notice; however, the trust wrote on September 5 seeking a commitment from the applicant to work for a minimum of six months.

Following a telephone conversation on September 6, the trust withdrew its offer of employment.

The industrial tribunal concluded that there was a contract of employment, but that the applicant's claim did not fall within article 3(c) of the 1994 Order because it was not a claim "outstanding on the termination of the employee's employment" as the employee's employment had not commenced.

The trust, in a cross-appeal, argued that there was no contract of employment, merely a contract for employment. That argument was not persuasive. No further contact between the parties was required. When the applicant turned up for work on October 1,

she would have been performing the contract agreed.

The trust argued that there was a difference between "employment" and a "contract of employment". But, under section 5(4) of the 1978 Act there would be an "effective date of termination" when the contract of employment was terminated.

There was no dispute that the applicant's contract was terminated, and it would seem strange to have an effective date of termination and yet no termination of the employment.

Further, under section 5(3)(i) an individual who had entered into a contract of employment was an "employee", even if she had not started performing the appropriate duties under the contract. It was difficult to see how one could have an employee without there being also employment.

But, given the difficulties of interpretation, it was right to adopt a purposive approach. In simple terms, the extension of jurisdiction by the 1994 Order was to enable an industrial tribunal to deal with both a claim for unfair dismissal, for example, and a claim for damages for breach of the same

contract of employment.

It might be thought that that would point away from the applicant's interpretation, because normally two years of continuous employment was required for an unfair dismissal claim. But that was not so where the claim was based on an inadmissible reason, for example, pregnancy or trade union membership.

There appeared to be no reason why someone engaged under a contract of employment to start work at a future date, but whose contract was then terminated on such a ground, should not, as a matter of principle, be able to claim for unfair dismissal. If that was so, it was right that he should be able to bring before the same tribunal a claim under section 13.

Accordingly, the phrase in article 3(c) of the 1994 Order "the termination of the employee's employment" was to be construed by reference to the termination of the employee's contract of employment, an approach widely used throughout the legislation.

It followed that the tribunal had been wrong to decline jurisdiction.

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SNOOKER

Parrott in the pink after Jones takes him to final frame

By PHIL YATES

JOHN PARROTT was given the fright of his life before scraping past Bradley Jones, the world No 199, 10-9 in the first round of the Embassy world championship at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, yesterday.

Parrott, the only player other than Stephen Hendry to capture the game's most coveted title during the 1990s, exhibited a steely nerve to pot the pink to a distant bank pocket in the closing frame as he finally shook off the unexpectedly resolute Jones.

Jones, the lowest-ranked of the qualifiers this year, demonstrated a determination not to be overawed by either the reputation of his rival or the importance of the occasion as, assisted by breaks of 70 and 76, he stylishly shared the first four frames of the day.

That gave Jones, who did not collect a penny in prize-money last season, the lead at 7-6, but Parrott then benefited from his most productive spell of the match. In winning the next two frames for 8-7 with runs of 90 and 102, he compiled 197 points without reply.

RESULTS

FIRST ROUND: Yesterday: A McLean (Scot) 61 W Snaddon (Scot) 10-9; N Burrows (Eng) 10-9 J Parrott (Eng) & B Jones (Eng) 10-8; Monday: S Davis (Eng) 10-9 D McLellan (Scot) 10-2

■ Television coverage from Sheffield is on BBC 2, Saturday 11.35pm-12.30am, 6.30pm-7.30am, 11.30pm-12.30am.

An indication that the pressure was becoming a little too intense by missing a routine black off its spot. Parrott coolly made 40 to bring up 9-9.

Lightning struck twice when, early in the decider, Jones missed an easy black. Parrott led 47-26 when he narrowly failed to sink the last

red down the length of the side cushion and Jones cleared to blue but, needing to pot only pink and black to progress, he rattled the penultimate colour.

A relieved Parrott committed no such mistake as he secured a meeting with Anthony Hamilton, from Nottingham, or Jimmy White, the Crucible's perennial nearly-man.

Billy Snaddon, from Scotland, who has played countless practice sessions with Hendry in recent years, failed to display the killer instinct associated with his more celebrated compatriot when he was beaten 10-9 by Alan McManus, yet another who hails from north of the border, after leading 8-4 and 9-8.

Snaddon, who needed to earn a meeting in the last 16 with Lee Walker to guarantee his place in the game's top 32 players next season, was poised to add McManus to the list of notable casualties when he led 58-0 in the thirteenth frame.

The turning point came when Snaddon missed a relatively straightforward red. McManus, the No 6 seed, eventually fashioned a courageous 65 clearance to steal the frame on the black and, multiplying the doubts that he had planted in his opponent's mind, he won the next frame on the blue after Snaddon had clumsily gone in-off when potting the yellow.

Having seen McManus recover to 8-8, Snaddon temporarily halted his slide by registering a decisive 66 break in the seventeenth frame, but still he found impossible to apply the finishing touches.

McManus carried the match to its full distance before prevailing in a tense decider by cross-doubling the brown off the side cushion to a corner pocket.

"I really struggled to get grips with the pressure," McManus, who clearly did not struggle to quite the same extent as Snaddon, said. "At 8-4, I honestly thought I was on my way home and to grind it out. Billy must be bitterly disappointed."

Nigel Bond, the runner-up to Hendry in the 1995 championship, was fully stretched before establishing a 5-4 lead over Stephen Lee, a candidate for being the most improved player on the professional circuit this season.

Lee, responsible for breaks of 64, 96 and 66, was set to carry a slender advantage into the concluding session last night when he led 59-0 in the ninth frame, but Bond claimed it from him on the black with a cleverly-crafted 59 clearance.

Goodway had been at the club since May 1994 and was the longest-serving coach in the 12-team competition. Jim Quinn, the Oldham chairman, who had persuaded Goodway to stay for the remainder of the season when he threatened to leave last month, and last week gave him a vote of confidence after the side's only win in seven matches, acted on the board's initiative.

Things have not been right behind the scenes since Andy threatened to resign after the defeat at Salford on Good Friday," Quinn said. "He is a hard-working young man, who is keen to build a successful coaching career, and I am

sure he will do that in the fullness of time."

Goodway, 35, the former Britain forward, might seek a move to coach in Australia, from where Bob Lindner, his predecessor, is due to return as Oldham's football director. Lindner, who had a brief spell in charge as player-coach, in 1994, will name successors to Goodway and Alan McCurrie, the assistant coach, who also went yesterday.

The departure of Joyner and Goodway, former Great Britain assistant coaches, has reduced the options for Joe Lydon, the Rugby Football League's new technical director, when he comes to nominate a possible successor to Phil Larder as the British coach for the three-match home series against Australia, in November.

Bradford Bulls must retain the last unbeaten record in the Super League in their home derby encounter tonight, which Halifax Blue Sox surprisingly won last year, to move ahead of St Helens at the top of the table by two points.

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ANDREW LONGMORE



At Punchestown Festival

The dapper little man in the tweed jacket and the glasses was celebrating as if he had won the Grand National himself. "Jeez, that was a great run. Did you see the way he took the Bank?" All around nodded agreement. Skated the dreaded Bank he had, and run a blinder.

The object of all the adulation was looking a trifle sore in his legs and putting it to bust, but nothing was going to dampen the spirit of his connections. After all, Tamer's Run had finished a gallant fifth and for a horse bought for next to nothing out of a yard which thought he was finished that was indeed a blinder.

"Winning is lovely," Charlie O'Neill, the owner, reflected. "But that's not important to me. I just love to be involved because of the pleasure it gives me." O'Neill had once bred, trained and ridden a horse called Hellfire Hostess to finish tenth of 28 in the Sun Alliance at Cheltenham. It was, he says, the greatest thrill of his life, but, the following morning, he was back on his farm milking his cows.

Like the majority of the 20,000 or so present at the opening day of the Punchestown Festival yesterday, O'Neill knows his racing, not as a punter, casual observer or hanger-on, but deep down from the cradle.

"I was taught to ride like any farmer's son round here," he said. "There are no divisions here, no glass cases. Everyone here has a genuine affinity for horses, not just for racing."

At Punchestown, you can sit down next to a man like Robert Connon, learn that he is a qualified solicitor and find that he rides out every morning before he goes into the office, once rode the winner of the charity race at Punchestown and is the nephew of Bobbie Cooran, who rode Captain Christy to victory in the King George VI Chase.

This is not so much a race meeting as a gathering of a big sporting family and to mark the occasion, the banks are closed, the schools close and the pubs open until the last man rolls home. At Punchestown too, your card is marked by the famed racing priest, Father Breen, who has built up quite a following for his Sunday sermons.

O'Neill may not be the Sheikh Mohammed of Irish racing, but he will do that in the fullness of time."

Goodway, 35, the former Britain forward, might seek a move to coach in Australia, from where Bob Lindner, his predecessor, is due to return as Oldham's football director. Lindner, who had a brief spell in charge as player-coach, in 1994, will name successors to Goodway and Alan McCurrie, the assistant coach, who also went yesterday.

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RACING: SPONSOR DISSATISFIED WITH TELEVISION AUDIENCE FIGURES FOR EPSOM CLASSIC

Vodafone threatens to cut Derby link

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE DERBY this year looks certain to be the last sponsored by Vodafone after an ultimatum over the size of the television audience for the Epsom classic.

Unless Channel 4 attracts five million viewers for the race on June 7 — and no Derby in recent times has enjoyed such a large audience — the Newbury-based mobile phone company plans to cease its sponsorship.

Terry Barwick, Vodafone's director of corporate affairs, confirmed yesterday that Chris Gent, the company's chief executive, had written formally to Sue Ellen, managing director of United Racecourses, setting out the sponsor's position.

"He has got that sort of number in mind. You have to also look at the press coverage of the event and the crowd, which I think will be better this year. But you need that kind of audience for the kind of money we are spending. We will look at it after the event and see what's what," he said.

Vodafone agreed to a three-year sponsorship of the Derby, worth £3.5 million, starting in 1995. It also has an option, which it must exercise by the end of June, to continue backing the race next year and in 1999.

However, the chances of that happening are bleak given the Derby's audience figures in recent years. Just over two million people watched Channel 4's coverage 12 months ago when the classic clashed with the start of Euro '96. In previous years the number of viewers seldom topped four million and the five million target set by Vodafone has not been

achieved during the past 20 years.

Barwick said: "We have to look at these things commercially. I hope they achieve the coverage we are seeking but, as a betting man, I would think they will do well to reach three million."

Vodafone recently signed a

£13 million deal to sponsor English cricket for five years, but Barwick denied his company was deliberately setting Epsom and Channel 4 an impossibly high hurdle so they could end their association with the Derby. "If we were happy with the Derby audience we would keep it

along with the cricket, because they can work together. Our business affects the consumer right across the board and it is all about branding."

Apart from the tough task Epsom is likely to face in finding a new sponsor who can help to promote a £1 million Derby, the withdrawal



Shaamit is applauded in the winner's enclosure at Epsom after his triumph in last season's Vodafone Derby

EPSOM

THUNDERER

2.05 Spender 3.40 ARTIC COURIER (nap) 4.10 Victor Blum 4.40 Kingchip Boy

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.35 Behaviour.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) DRAW: 6F. LOW NUMBERS BEST TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

2.05 BANSTEAD HANDICAP (25,446, 6D) (10 runners)

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103 (3) 0220-0 TILER 14 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 5-5-3 ...
104 (4) 0854-1 SPENDER 12 (D,F,G) (Entrepreneur) P Harris 6-6-3 ...
105 (5) 061201 ORANGE PLACE 513 (2G,6,5) (6 Armer) T Neeson 6-6-11 ...
106 (6) 0844-0 MILLIE 200 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 6-6-11 ...
107 (7) 0844-0 50 INTRUDER 20 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 6-6-11 ...
108 (8) 0-00024 MILLAS 27 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) H Brough 4-6-6 ...
109 (9) 300005 WILLOW DALE 12 (D,F,G) (6 Armer) T Neeson 4-6-6 ...
110 (10) 3210-0 THE FIRE 209 (D,F,G) (6 Armer) R Miller 6-6-11 ...
BETTING: 7-2 My Best Valentine; 4-1 Spender; 5-1 Lord Oliver; 6-1 Banstead Park; 7-1 Tiler; 8-1 50 Intruder; 10-1 Orange Place; 12-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

MY BEST VALENTINE 7M (2G) J White 7-10-0 ...
SELHURST PARK FLYER 205 (2G,F,G) J Berry 6-6-3 ...
SPENDER 12 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 5-5-3 ...
TILER 14 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) P Harris 6-6-3 ...
WILIE 200 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 6-6-11 ...
WILLOW DALE 12 (D,F,G) (6 Armer) T Neeson 4-6-6 ...
WILLY 27 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) R Miller 6-6-11 ...
BETTING: 7-2 My Best Valentine; 4-1 Spender; 5-1 Lord Oliver; 6-1 Banstead Park; 7-1 Tiler; 8-1 50 Intruder; 10-1 Orange Place; 12-1 others.

100 NO CORRESPONDENT MEETING

FORM FOCUS

MY BEST VALENTINE 7M (2G) J White 7-10-0 ...
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SPENDER 12 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 5-5-3 ...
TILER 14 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) P Harris 6-6-3 ...
WILIE 200 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) M Johnson 6-6-11 ...
WILLOW DALE 12 (D,F,G) (6 Armer) T Neeson 4-6-6 ...
WILLY 27 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) R Miller 6-6-11 ...
BETTING: 7-2 My Best Valentine; 4-1 Spender; 5-1 Lord Oliver; 6-1 Banstead Park; 7-1 Tiler; 8-1 50 Intruder; 10-1 Orange Place; 12-1 others.

2.35 CITY AND SUBURBAN HANDICAP (28,364; 1M 21 18y) (14 runners)

201 (1) 312303 BEHAVIOR 7 (D,F) (4 stars) Mrs J Clegg 5-10-0 ...
202 (2) 43054-0 PRINCE OF MY HEART 2G (D,F,G) J Berry 6-6-4 ...
203 (3) 062040 ADAMANT 20 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) P Harris 6-6-3 ...
204 (4) 09023-0 HOW EXPRESS 22 (D) (Also C Roblesco) I Bolding 6-6-3 ...
205 (5) 410400-0 THE DILETTANT 245 (D,F) (Also C Roblesco) J Teller 4-6-11 ...
206 (6) 0-0220-0 MAJOR CHANCE 25 (D,F) (Also C Roblesco) A Fallon 4-6-11 ...
207 (7) 03030-0 TIME FOR ACTION 25 (D,F) (Also C Roblesco) A Fallon 4-6-11 ...
208 (8) 311141 STANLEY RACE 25 (D,F) (Also C Roblesco) A Fallon 4-6-11 ...
209 (9) 02202-0 CHAMPION PRINCE 12 (F) (Also C Roblesco) A Fallon 4-6-11 ...
210 (10) 22022-0 TIRLAM RACE 15 (F,E,F) J McCarthy 4-6-4 ...
211 (11) 054300 SILVER GRODUN 12 (F,G) R Hansen 4-11-0 ...
212 (12) 0151-0 SHARPE DANCE 12 (F,G) R Hansen 4-11-0 ...
213 (13) 0161-0 50 INTRUDER 22 (D,F,G) (Also C Roblesco) A Fallon 4-6-11 ...
214 (14) 02000-0 OPENING 249 (D,F) (Also C Roblesco) A Fallon 4-7-10 ...
Long handicap: Stabilise 7.8; Barn Offspring 7.8; BETTING: 5-2 Howard A Glass; 5-1 Prince of My Heart; 7-1 Silver Green; 8-1 Dance So Suite; 10-1 Sleep Shelly; 12-1 others.

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2.35 CATTERICK

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3.30 CATTERICK

2.00 THUNDERER 2.30 Maleday, 3.00 Tessie, 3.30 Mithale, 4.00 Soda, 4.30 Flourishing Way, 5.00

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.00 Philister.

3.30 IVAN LUIS (nap).

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FOOTBALL

Peace breaks out as Brighton shift balance of power

By NICK SZCZEPANIK

AFTER a year of pitch invasions, demonstrations and boycotts, supporters of Brighton and Hove Albion finally got the result they wanted yesterday when details were revealed of an arrangement brokered by the Football Association through the Centre for Dispute Resolution (CEDR), for the restructuring of the Nationwide League's bottom club, which needs to win its two remaining matches to avoid relegation to the Vauxhall Conference.

Under the terms of the deal, the existing board of directors, although retaining 49% per cent of the shareholding, will relinquish control of the club. The new chairman will be Dick Knight, the 58-year-old leader of a consortium that will have an equal holding. The remaining one per cent will be held by Martin Perry, a director of Alfred McAlpine, the developers expected to build a new 15,000-25,000 seat stadium to replace the Goldstone Ground, the sale of

which by the previous regime precipitated the protests. It will stage its last game, against Doncaster Rovers, on Saturday.

Bill Archer, the outgoing chairman, and the focus of a concerted campaign that has seen "Archer out" posters appear on the lower slopes of Mount Everest, will remain on the board, but acknowledged his part in the stormy events of the past 12 months. "I would like to apologise for all the trauma and distress I have caused people," Archer said. "But it was a price worth paying. We were forcing a very emotional issue, but we're going to get a brand new stadium."

Knight, his successor, promised a £2 million investment in players, supporters' representation in the boardroom, and that all efforts would be made to secure a temporary ground within Brighton and Hove while the new stadium takes shape. However, no announcement is

expected before the end of this season.

"I, my co-directors, the FA and CEDR are satisfied with the outcome and I hope the supporters will be satisfied too," Knight said. "For the good of the club, we must all get on with rebuilding the Albion to prove that every single person's effort has been worthwhile."

Supporters welcomed the announcement. "Excellent news," Paul Samrah, of the Brighton Independent Supporters Association, said. "It's everything we wanted. Bill Archer has relinquished control, which was the main point and I would urge everyone in Brighton and Hove to get behind the team and the club."

Knight, in turn, paid tribute to the supporters, whose "creativity" he hoped the club would be able to harness. "I want to thank all Albion fans for their resilience and patience over the last months. I'm looking forward to being chairman, but I take the post with some humility — the last year has been a fantastic show of the emotional ties that bind supporters and clubs."

The deal, negotiated over a period of 20 weeks, represents a dominant, almost arrogant display and an easy away win that reduced a European Cup semi-final between the two most successful teams of the past two years to almost a mismatch. And then Juventus lost to Udinese.

It was an extraordinary result, its manner even more so. Ten days ago, in front of their own supporters at the Stadio Delle Alpi in Turin, Juventus found themselves playing against ten men from just the second minute, after Genua, a Udinese defender, had been dismissed — and somehow lost 3-0. Louis van Gaal, the coach of Ajax, whose

team had been beaten so convincingly just four days earlier, could barely believe his ears when he heard the score.

Last weekend, Van Gaal was in Italy to see for himself whether it was an aberration or whether the European champions really were struggling. Not struggling, perhaps, but a 1-0 defeat of Bologna still gave Van Gaal renewed grounds for optimism.

"They looked tired to me," he said yesterday. "The first real scoring chance fell to the other team and, if they had taken it, I don't know how the match would have finished. We, too, had the first scoring chance in the first leg against Juventus, but missed. That's football. Now we'll be obliged

to attack and to score an early goal that will revive our hopes and make Juventus start to have doubts.

"I can't help asking myself if Juventus, who are unquestionably the best in the world, will be able to repeat their extraordinary performance in the first leg. It will be easier for us to continue the way we played in the second half, when, with more pride than cool-headedness, we were able to take the game in hand."

Van Gaal may have a point. Juventus, who took control of the tie with goals by Amoruso and Vieri in the Amsterdam Arena, were showing concern yesterday over the threat posed by Jari Litmanen, the Finland captain, who scored Ajax's reply in their 2-1 first-

"Even if I'm not at my best, I'll be there," he said. "I cannot miss one of the most important matches of my career." Particularly since Patrick Kluivert, the other leading Ajax striker, is a definite non-starter. Juventus will miss the injured Del Piero and suspended Jugovic, but remain an intimidating prospect.

Ajax's intimidating days may be coming to an end, for a while at least. A number of key players left last season, more, including Kluivert and Winston Bogarde, will do so in the summer and Van Gaal concluded: "My players know full well that a cycle could be coming to an end in Turin, but they want to finish it in the best way possible, with their heads high."

Ajax find cause for optimism in Italy

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

IT SEEMED like a foregone conclusion. Two quick goals, a dominant, almost arrogant display and an easy away win that reduced a European Cup semi-final between the two most successful teams of the past two years to almost a mismatch. And then Juventus lost to Udinese.

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Celtic's temperament on trial in semi-final replay

By KEVIN McCARRA

CELTIC approach the Tennents Scottish Cup semi-final replay against Falkirk tonight with the stealth of a cat burglar. There has been a resounding silence, with neither Tommy Burns, the club's manager, nor his assistant, Billy Stark, available for comment. Instead, only a single-sentence communiqué, detailing injuries, was faxed to newspapers.

The reticence might be seen as a reprisal for weeks of speculation about Burns's future with the club. It is also possible, however, that the manager has recognised that the moment for speechlessness has arrived. Too many words have already spilled out this season and Celtic may feel that it is time quietly to attend to business.

The need for a further match with Falkirk, modest performers in the Bell's Scottish League first division, was another instance of the recurring fallibility in Burns's team. Doggedly though Falkirk played, only nervousness prevented Celtic from building a substantial lead 11 days ago.

As it was, they were just one goal in front when a sweeping cross from Jamie McGowan

allowed Kevin James to head home for Falkirk. That 1-1 draw will be indulged by supporters as an idiosyncrasy if Celtic assert themselves at Ibrox this evening, but failure would surely end Burns's career as manager at the club.

His side defeated Aberdeen 3-0 on Sunday, ending a sequence of five matches without a win, and seemed, in the process, to recover a smoothness of movement that would easily outmanoeuvre Falkirk. Celtic should, in addition, be capable of even greater sophistication tonight.

Paul McStay, Celtic's fax assured the world, is fit once again, having missed the past two games with a groin injury, and his ability to direct the play should provide them with an authority absent in the first attempt at the semi-final.

Tommy Johnson, the former Aston Villa forward, is also available and Peter Grant, the midfield player, is now free of suspension, while Paolo di Canio has recovered from a knock to his knee.

Enumerating the personnel is a futile exercise, however, where Celtic are concerned. The capacity of the team to excel, whatever its make-up, against Falkirk is not in doubt

and the real questions are ones of temperament. All season, Celtic have shown a knack for embroiling themselves in difficulties.

The loss of all four League fixtures to Rangers was galling for supporters, but it is significant, too, that Celtic have dropped points against the bottom two clubs in the premier division, losing to Motherwell and drawing with Raith Rovers.

They have yet to prove that they can live at peace with their own ambition. The craving for a trophy seems to disable each attempt to win one and there have been no honours for Celtic since the Scottish Cup in 1995. The real task for Burns's side lies not so much in surmounting the challenge of Falkirk as in finding a way out of their own neuroses.

Celtic may be in a labyrinth, but for Alex Totten's side, the midfield ahead is simple. He has a fit squad which, he feels, should have drawn confidence from the 1-1 draw. Despite the experience of men such as Andy Gray, who was once capped by England, serenity of mind should not, all the same, be enough to save Celtic from defeat.

"We need to bring in three or four players in the 20 to 27 age bracket, people of quality, and to continue working with the youngsters we have here already. At the moment the squad isn't big enough. I've drawn up a list of the players I want for next season but they are only in my mind for now."

Arsenal's squad too small for Europe

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

ARSENAL WENGER, the Arsenal manager, has admitted that he will need to strengthen his squad considerably if they are to be a force in Europe next season. Arsenal need another three points to ensure a UEFA Cup place at least, after drawing 1-1 at Coventry City on Monday night. The alternative is to finish as runners-up and claim a place in the Champions League.

He said: "Why hit the ball long? If you do that, you give it away many times and we do not have a Dion Dublin-type player up front who can take every ball with his head. I prefer us to play it out."

Wright seemed even more agitated than usual and collected his second yellow card in successive matches for a late challenge on Brian Bowes.

But Wright found an ally in the Coventry striker, Noel Whelan, who said: "It's just his character. That's the way Ian is and it is quite funny. You've got to accept it. He has his own little way of going about things."

Gordon Strachan, the Coventry player-manager, was left bemoaning the fact that the newly found passion and commitment of his players was not uncashed earlier in the season.

Had that been harnessed to the undoubted ability in the squad, then Coventry would now be in mid-table rather than still looking over their shoulders at the bottom three.

Forest turn to Fettis in search for a saviour

By RICHARD HOBSON

IT WILL come as no consolation to David James, that the troubled Liverpool custodian is not the only member of the goalkeepers' union in difficulty at present. There are likely to be doubts of one sort or another over each of the four keepers in action in the FA Carling Premiership tonight.

Nottingham Forest, who visit Derby County, must rely on their second choice, Alan Fettis, for the last three games of the season because Mark Crossley has succumbed to a long-standing double hernia problem and will undergo surgery this week.

As those offering support to James have testified, there is a correlation between safe hands and self-belief, yet Forest have hardly imbued Fettis, a Northern Ireland international, with confidence. When Crossley was absent in March, Stuart Pearce, the player-manager, delayed Tommy Wright's transfer to Manchester City rather than select Fettis.

Forest have drawn five of their past six games, but remain bottom of the table and realistically must win each of their last three fixtures to avoid relegation for the second time in four years.

most difficult run-in of the bottom clubs. With Julian Dicks ruled out for the season after a knee operation yesterday, they meet Leicester City at Filbert Street tonight before facing Shrewsbury Wednesday, Newcastle and Manchester United in their three remaining fixtures.

Harry Redknapp, the manager, was quick to blame John Hartson for allowing Paul Kison to take the penalty against Everton that should have opened up a decisive 3-0 lead, but Ludek Miklosko has been uneasy of late and was responsible for both Everton goals. The Czech maintains his place, however.

Kasey Keller returns for Leicester City after keeping goal for the United States in a World Cup qualifying match against Mexico, though not with a warm embrace from Martin O'Neill, the manager.

"We are paying Kasey's wages, but he keeps missing our games because the United States have the first call," O'Neill said. "It is a bone of contention and we have to work out an agreement for next season or get somebody else in, but Steve Sampson [the United States coach] does not return my calls."

West Ham United have the

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Santoro: resolve

PETE SAMPRAS, the world No 1, joined the exodus of seeds at the Monte Carlo Open yesterday when he was beaten 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 by Magnus Larsson, of Sweden. It was the third time in three appearances at the tournament that Sampras, who did not look at ease on the clay courts, has lost in the first round.

Sampras took the first set with some comfort but soon found himself bombarded by a succession of unstoppable forehands from the Swede, ranked No 43 in the world. Larsson quickly levelled the match by cruising through the second set and maintained his momentum in the decider, moving to a 4-1 lead before driving a forehand down the line on his first match point.

Thomas Muster, the world No 2, and Boris Becker were also prominent departures. Fabrice Santoro, of France, ranked No 90 in the world, over-

whelmed Muster 6-2, 7-6, while Becker, who has never won a tournament on clay, went out 6-1, 3-6, 6-7 to Renzo Furlan, of Italy, the world No 65.

Santoro, playing with marvellous touch, baffled Muster in the first set and then showed his resolve to secure a fine victory, taking the tie-break 7-3 when Muster double-faulted on the second match point.

Muster, who was attempting to become the first man to win in Monte Carlo four times, led 3-1 in the second set, when he appeared to have worked the errors out of his game and come to terms with Santoro's shot selection.

He served for the second set at 5-4 but double-faulted on break point to let Santoro back and the Frenchman went on to record his third win over Muster.

"But every time I have to fight for every point," Santoro said. He now faces Sergi Bruguera, of Spain, in the final.

Becker, three times the Wimbledon champion, had suffered a thigh injury in losing to Lionel Roux, of France, in

the third round of the Japan Open last week and it was obvious that the German, who returned in Tokyo after a two-month lay-off caused by a wrist injury, was lacking match practice.

Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski, the British No 1 and No 2, are back on the Queen's Club practice courts after their injuries, searching for full fitness to maintain their world rankings. Henman, who last played in the Lipton championships in Key Biscayne five weeks ago, when he lost to the Spanish qualifier, Julian Alonso, has remained at No 15 in the world although several of his closest rivals have narrowed the points gap. "There was no pain whatsoever, which is a pleasing sign," he said after practice yesterday.

Rusedski has played only two matches in three comeback attempts since hurting his wrist in the final of the San Jose event, against Sampras, in mid-February. He has dropped four places to No 40.

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Fig. 9. How to curl celery for garnishing.

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CRICKET: LEICESTERSHIRE BEGIN CHAMPIONSHIP DEFENCE SUPREMELY SURE OF THEIR OWN ABILITY

Whitaker predicts repeat performance

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

JAMES WHITAKER drew some discouraging responses when he predicted, this time last year, that he would lead Leicestershire to the county championship. Some laughed; others thought him worthy of sympathy; but nobody is mocking him now, not even when he begins the new season calmly forecasting that it can be done again.

The fulfilment of Whitaker's prophecy was one of the great sporting achievements of 1996, for Leicestershire won the title with only 13 players, few of whom were familiar to anyone outside the uncrowded confines of Grace Road. They won it not because they had the best players, for they demonstrably did not, but because they were the best team.

In his first season of captaincy, at the relatively advanced age of 34, Whitaker instilled in his players a unity and self-belief that reached out to repel all who threatened them. The bonding was augmented by meticulous match preparation that disdained the indifferent attitudes blighting county cricket. By September, nobody could argue that Leicestershire did not deserve the championship.

Now, though, they must scale the mountain again and do so with the defences of the opposition more alert to their ability. Whitaker is inclined to dismiss this difficulty, confident that his success was no unrepeatable freak, but he does concede: "It is another different challenge because none of us has been in this situation before."

"I'm just as excited about it as I was last year. I want to win it again, because it's too good a feeling to be satisfied with one, and I believe we are good enough to do it."

Whitaker, however, has a streak of Yorkshire realism in him, and added: "Although our formula will be the same,

we will need to find an extra 5 or 10 per cent."

In Whitaker's mind, this is required to compensate for the absence of Phil Simmons, an all-round inspiration as overseas player last year. With immense reluctance, Leicestershire have decided that they cannot wait until June for his release by West Indies and a stand-in, perhaps Lance Klusener, the South African, should be announced today.

If Leicestershire enjoyed luck last summer, it was in the freedom from serious injuries that enabled them to retain a consistent team. Already, that continuity is under threat. Not only will they have no foreigner for the opening game of the defence, at home to Gloucestershire today, but also they will be without Ben Smith – an ever-present last season – and possibly Alan Mullally, who has been unwell since returning from holiday.

Whitaker is unbowed. Darren Maddy and Afzab Habib, he predicts, will have benefited from their first full season and could emerge as batsmen of stature. Pointing to the success enjoyed by the county's second team, he then identifies Iain Stuttfield and James Ormond as young players likely to press for regular places. Either, or both, could play today.

Impartially, Whitaker feels that the four-day format will continue to suit his team. "Good sides do not need to look for declarations or consecutive finishes over four days," he said. "The strong will usually come out on top. I'm just so glad that we have shown up the three-day cricket we played as the farce it was."

Hear, hear to that – and another endorsement to Surrey, who, admittedly rich to the point of embarrassment in home-grown talent, have decided that they will not engage an overseas player this summer. David Graveney, the chairman of England selectors, calls this "the best decision to come out of county cricket for years."

If only more counties would take the plunge, trusting in their own ability rather than sheltering behind expensive imports, we would not have the absurd situation applying today, when six counties are still awaiting the arrival of foreign players for whom they have used up resources far better employed in the furtherance of the English game. Somerset, who provide Sur-

rey's first opponents at the Oval, are one of the six. Mushtaq Ahmed is not expected until late next week and, with Andre van Troost ruled out and Andy Caddick – his injuries still not quite behind him – having a late fitness test, their attack could be denuded.

Nottinghamshire are not quite in the same situation, for they did not have anything resembling an attack last season, but their recently – one might say desperately – acquired Pakistani, Mohammad Zahid, is also on the missing list. This at least gives them a chance to play Paul Franks, the promising seam bowler, against Worcestershire.

At Cardiff, where Glamorgan wait impatiently for Waqar Younis, Warwickshire will give a debut to David Hemp, who might enter the wrong dressing-room after six seasons with the Welsh county. There could be three Sussex debuts against Northamptonshire at Hove, although as these include Neil Taylor, 37, and Mark Robinson, 30, it is no indication of a thriving youth policy. Poor Sussex (this

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Graveney sets out to stiffen England's backbone

By ALAN LEE

NOTHING said yesterday by Mark Waugh, wounding though it was, will remotely have surprised England's new chairman of selectors, David Graveney. His long acknowledged that Australians have a low opinion of our cricket and Waugh's sweeping condemnation of English players as "not tough enough or hungry enough" will reinforce his determination to make them revise their opinions during the Ashes series this summer.

He does not pretend it will be easy, Graveney may resent the condescen-

sion, exemplified by Waugh's remarks but the thrust of his criticism will find no argument. Indeed, the chairman and his fellow selectors, Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting, share a number of concerns about the approach of English players.

Waugh, quoted extensively in a pre-tour magazine, is not by nature either arrogant or volatile, so his judgments must be taken seriously. His most damning indictment of England was when saying: "They don't play as a team, they worry about themselves. When you're out there, you don't feel you've got guys against you." England's manage-

ment is not in the mood to dismiss this as a cheap, psychological shot.

There is, as Waugh avers, a self-centred streak prevalent in many a modern English cricketer. There is also an air of pampered complacency and neither is conducive to a committed team ethos. Graveney is setting out to put this right, starting today at Canterbury, where it can be assumed his priorities will include a session alone with Dominic Cork. Things have come quickly, and sometimes too easily, for Cork since his Test debut less than two years ago, but he has now encountered a deep trough of form and attitude that has under-

mined management confidence in him. His problems run too deep for a few words from on high to solve everything but Graveney's human approach is to be applauded. Too often, in the past, England players have complained that nobody in authority was around to counsel and communicate when things went wrong, a negligence responsible for some of the more obvious failings in character.

In the days to come, Graveney will travel around the counties speaking to as many present or potential England players as he can. Among those visited will be Graeme Hick

and Chris Lewis, both solitary types who might believe the national team has abandoned them. Graveney is keen to dispel any such view and although Lewis's unreliable record counts against him in most eyes, Graveney is not one to be dictated to by past misdemeanours.

The first job of the selectors is to identify a one-day unit capable of winning the Texaco Trophy and Hick, at least, will almost certainly feature. Graveney has decided to abolish the system of official paid observers favoured by Raymond Illingworth, and will instead rely upon his own network of contacts.

Manchester United have long been England's biggest football club, but they are still getting bigger and at a faster rate than the others. The distance between Manchester United and the rest – in terms of support, in terms of wealth, in terms of achievement – is still expanding.

And still it expands. Territorial television's main live football offering is European competition, principally the European Cup and the so-called Champions' League. That is to say, Manchester United. The richest club has the largest recruiting ground almost to itself. Why it reaps a still greater benefit from this recruitment when pay-per-view television is with us?

It is getting embarrassing. Soon the jokes we make about Scottish football will have to be silenced – blamey, exciting, isn't it, some years you really can't guess who is going to finish third. Last week I wrote about Tiger Woods and the Eclipse Phenomenon. "Eclipse first, the rest nowhere". The Premiership is getting like that. And that is beginning to get rather dull.

We have reached a stage when Manchester United polarise the views of just about every single person involved in English football. Everybody in the country is a Manchester United fan, in so far as almost everyone cares passionately about every Manchester United result. They either hope fervently in the state of English football.

Increasingly, Manchester United's victories look cheap – because there is no effective opposition. I repeat, nothing wrong with Manchester United's pursuit of excellence. But their success is symptomatic of what their success hides: that something is rotten in the state of English football.

Meddings elevated by England

DANNY MEDDINGS AND

TICKY WILSON

ARE SET TO MAKE

THEIR MARK IN THE

ENGLISH TEAM

FOR THE FIRST TIME

IN BRIEF

BY SIMON BARNES

WITH PICTURES BY

ROSS KENNARD/ALLSPORT

AND STYLING BY

ROB COOPER

PHOTOGRAPH BY

ROSS KENNARD/ALLSPORT

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PHOTOGRAPH BY

ROSS KENNARD/ALLSPORT

AND STYLING BY

ROB COOPER

Plumbing the dramatic depths of the Peak

It had clearly been a long time since Dr Andrew Atwood played rugby, so long in fact that he couldn't quite remember whether he used to be a wing three-quarter or a wing forward. Sensibly, he practised a bit of both. But it had clearly been even longer since Nigel Cole, director of last night's *Peak Practice* (ITV), had chased the oval ball. As it was lobbed gently down the Cardale three-quarter line every single pass went conspicuously forward. Still, who cares about the rules as long as hunky, muddy Andrew gets to score under the posts.

One of the great things about *Peak Practice*, perhaps the greatest, is that nobody involved in its production ever stops to ask "do you think we've gone too far?". Rules are there to be disregarded, marks there to be overstepped — as the concluding episode to the series showed. The concept of dramatic excess no longer existed.

"Right everyone, last episode coming up — any ideas?" Well, we could have Erica's cottage burning down. "What's the one she's spent the entire series renovating?" Just a thought. "And a good one, make a note somebody — burn down cottage — love it, what else?"

How about Andrew and Erica kissing, you know really kissing? "Yeah, yeah, the snog's a given — next." We've still got to decide whether dreary David and crazy Clare have a happy ending or an unhappy ending? "Tell me about it, especially as contracts for the next series haven't been signed yet."

How about the Cardale shuffle — little bit happy, little bit unhappy — that way we keep everyone on their toes. Now, subplots?

Er, couldn't we have a macho pilot? "Hmmm... Suffering from dizzy spells?" Yes. "With a son? 'Go on... who is secretary gay? 'Love it.' And — this is just off the wall, boss — we could get Dr

David to arrange a free flight for that little boy recovering from leukaemia. "With the same pilot he's treating for dizzy spells?" Er, yes. "Hmmm, oh, what the... it's the last episode, let's do it. As long as everybody realises the budget won't stretch."

How about Andrew and Erica kissing, you know really kissing? "Yeah, yeah, the snog's a given — next." We've still got to decide whether dreary David and crazy Clare have a happy ending or an unhappy ending? "Tell me about it, especially as contracts for the next series haven't been signed yet."

With *happy endings* breaking out all over the place (Clare loves David, Erica loves Andrew, macho pilot loves gay son really) actors competed to deliver the worst line of television dialogue ever written. Was it a) Dr David, in reflective mood on runway, with: "Life

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

doesn't work out like that — I didn't want Clare to be manic depressive and you didn't want Danny to be gay — but it's happened." Or was it b) Dr Erica, who in between having her house burnt down and searching for her real mother, still found time for some quality thinking amid smouldering ruins: "I realised that I was so scared of being hurt by anyone, I didn't want to let them

close — that's why I've been pushing you away." Personally, I loved them both. You decide.

The excellent *Seven Wonders of the World* (BBC2) also came to an end last night, still prompting the two — in this case very minor — criticisms it started with. First, why do the makers insist on revealing so many of the chosen wonders in advance, thereby robbing the programme of any element of surprise? And second, having borrowed both the format and Sue Lawley from *Desert Island Discs*, why is the participant then allowed to ramble on unchecked, choosing whatever wonder he or she pleases? Roy Plomley would never have allowed Steven Pinker to choose the camera, the eye and stereo vision as three separate wonders — far too similar, old chap.

Having said that, Pinker (who has the looks of somebody who might have sung very bad pop songs in the 1970s) rambled on quite fascinatingly last night. For those who didn't see it, he is a professor of psychology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, whose specialist field is the learning of language in infants. "Any one of the world's 6,000 languages can be learnt by the human infant — without lessons." However, the great mystery of why the British adolescent can't manage another one — even with lots of lessons — was beyond him.

construction that I ever had. What do you mean, you can't believe it?

Finally, it was time for our weekly fix of compassion and Children's Hospital (BBC1), which remains one of the most cynical pieces of ratings-grabbing television around. Sure, it's moving (and last night's mix of life-threatening hernias, brain-damage and brittle bone disease was harrowing even by its own standards) but served up in a series of no less than 20 programmes, it's clear that our emotions are being steered by automatic pilot. "Ooh, aren't they brave," we think, a specified number of times per episode. "Ooh, aren't they clever," we think, as the medical staff pull off yet another miracle.

Hospitals are hospitals, not soap operas, where involvement makes voyeurs of us all. *Children's Hospital* is addictive television, but that doesn't make it right. Or have I gone too far?

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (60575)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (70335120)
9.05 Election Call Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown answers questions posed by viewers (903491)
10.00 Style Challenge (29743)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (17323)
11.00 News (T) regional news and weather (4221255)
11.05 The Really Useful Show (T) (9754946)
11.35 Snooker: World Championship Jimmy White v Anthony Hamilton and Alan Robidoux v Brian Morgan (3262830)
12.35pm Good Living The latest homestyle ideas and gardening tips (9371323)
1.00 News (T) and weather (68120)
1.30 Regional News (50918507)
1.45 Neighbours (T) (702755)
2.10 Snooker: World Championship John Higgins v Graeme Dott, and James Wattana v Graeme Dott. Continues on BBC2 (417255)
3.30 Playdays (T) (6596033) 3.50 Monster Cafe (T) (67543) 4.05 The New Yogi Bear Show (T) (9671255) 4.10 Gadget Boy (8776323) 4.30 Out of Tune (T) (T) (7008323) 5.00 Newround (T) (575472) 5.10 Blue Peter (T) (1350823)
5.35 Neighbours (T) (T) (128255)
6.00 News (T) and weather (528)
6.30 Regional News (T) (787)

7.00 How Do They Do That? The last of the series. A crack team of plotters reveal how they can "write" two-mile-high across the sky; the carot cabaret featured in a TV advertisement; and a special guest reveals some closely guarded royal secrets (T) (7858)

7.30 Tomorrow's World Plans to automate the French underground system by programming trains to run by themselves and avoid collisions. Plus, a project in Cambridge where planners are being used to remind residents of their daily tasks (T) (782)

8.00 The National Lottery Live with Carol Smalls (T) (880217)

8.10 Ballyhooangel The tranquillity of Ballyhooangel is shattered by the appearance of a glamorous figure from Father Clifford's past (T) (T) (39471)

8.00 News (T) and regional news (103385)

9.00 Party Election Broadcast by the Liberal Democrats (T) (903491)

9.00 National Lottery Update (911410)

10.00 There Think It's All Over Nottingham Forest general manager Dave Bassett and Mark Little join regulars Gary Lineker, David Glover, Lee Hurst and Roy McGrath for the comedy sports quiz, hosted by Nick Hancock (T) (26584)

10.30 48 Hrs (1982) with Nick Nolte, Eddie Murphy and Annette O'Toole. A hard-boiled cop enlists a convicted robber's help to track down two escaped killers. Directed by Walter Hill (T) (76192)

12.00 Film: The Glory Guys (1985) Western adventure with Tom Tryon, Harvey Presnell and James Caan. A US Cavalry officer disobeys the orders of his General. Directed by Arnold Laven (T) (255908)

1.50am-1.55 Weather (5953908)

VideoPlus+ and the VideoPlus Codes
The numbers next to each TV programme listing are VideoPlus+ numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+ handset. Tap in the VideoPlus+ code for the program and with the remote Videoplayer (+) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

BBC2

6.00am Open University: The Birth of Modern Geometry (2928033) 6.25 One Small Step (297168) 6.50 Out of the Blue? (2025205)

7.15 See Hear News (872946)

7.30 Teenage Turnies (T) (4806101) 7.55 The Lowdown (T) (5050675) 8.00 Phillip the Frog (T) (3827120) 8.25 Buzz Bee and Friends (T) (7086897) 8.35 The Raccoons (T) (9526033)

9.00 Discovering Portuguese (3161878) 9.25 Ballerina (T) (9205656) 9.45 Words and Pictures (2805052) 10.00 Telebabies (T) (2025853) 10.45 Cate Eyes (2012014) 11.00 Moving to English (4280385) 11.20 The Art (7853120) 11.40 Study Ireland (G72127) 12.00 The Shape of the World (78007)

12.30pm Working Lunch (33859) 1.00 Geography Collection (7034558) 1.25 Zyg Zag (5478226) 1.46 Come Outside (50904304) 2.00 Philbert the Frog (T) (3783972) 2.05 The Adventures of Buzz Bee and Friends (T) (3738303) 2.35 Campaign Roadshow (T) (8761768)

3.30 Snooker: World Championship John Higgins v Graham Dott, and James Wattana v Graeme Dott (T) (78128)

3.50 Star Trek: The Next Generation (T) (T) (927656)

4.45 Snooker: World Championship Tony Drago v Dominic Dale, Plus: Jimmy White v Anthony Hamilton (T) (7027526)

7.30 Black Britain why are there so few black people working in the construction trade? (T) (304)

8.00 University Challenge Magdalen College, Oxford v Queen's University, Belfast (T) (4945)

8.30 Home Front Tessa Shaw visits India and the dream kitchen nears completion in the *Home Front* house (T) (7871)

8.50 Modern Times: The End of an Annoying Exploration of alternative funeral ideas (T) (134255)

9.50 A Woman Called Smith Barbara a 37-year-old paramedic and the Northumbria Ambulance Service (T) (901033)

10.00 Airport (T) (T) (26566)

10.30 Election Broadcast: Liberal Democrats (T) (102928)

10.35 Newsnight (982743)

11.35 Snooker Late-night round-up (137149)

12.25pm Weather (3901279)

12.30am Leisure Zone: O.U.L. The healing power of emotions (88688) 1.00 The Earth's crusts (343543) 1.30 The KT Event (99502) 2.00 The Geography Programme/Fight Paths (78611) 4.05 History truth or fiction? (42279) 4.20 Unicef in the Classroom (T) (1618) 5.00 Basic Skills (40250) 5.30 Voluntary Matters (50847)

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HTV

6.00am GMTV (2928168)

9.25 Chair Letters (T) (3151491)

9.35 Regional News (2206787)

10.00 The Time, the Place (54439)

10.30 This Morning (T) (6164039)

12.20pm Regional news (4994507)

12.30 News and weather (2267120)

12.55 Shortland Street (3232439) 1.25 Home and Away (T) (6474401) 1.50 Afternoon Live (T) (5329584) 2.20 Vanessa (T) (2258957) 2.50 Late Afternoon Live (T) (5540410)

3.20 News (T) (729210) 3.25 Regional news and weather (7291781)

3.30 Total TV (T) (6738491) 3.40 Alphabet Castle (T) (6396534) 3.50 Soo and Co (T) (6651965) 4.10 Animaniacs (T) (9654588) 4.20 Tiny Toon Adventures (T) (871210) 4.40 Harry's Mad (T) (T) (881376)

5.10 Bagged Cafe (1214491)

5.40 News (T) and weather (358965)

6.00 Home and Away (T) (192762)

6.25 HTV Weather (606453)

6.30 The West Tonight (T) (503014)

6.45 Party Election Broadcast by the Liberal Democrats (850067)

**RACING 50,51**

Vodafone threatens to pull the plug on Epsom Derby

SPORT

WEDNESDAY APRIL 23 1997

CRICKET 53

Leicestershire set off in pursuit of championship repeat



Munich beckons Manchester United

Ferguson seeks May date with destiny

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE Old Trafford forecourt was packed with cars yesterday. Tour parties strolled in front of the stadium's mass of empty red seats and bent to touch the turf. Outside, they stood and stared up at the statue of Sir Matt Busby, holding a football under his arm and the black and white clock inscribed with a date and a single word: Munich.

"For them," Ferguson said. "It can be a bit like when you were a little boy and you used to read the comics, and even though you did not believe them, you still read them. There is this great thing about reading about the great players from abroad, from Milan, Ajax and Dortmund, and

TEAMS

MANCHESTER UNITED (probable, 4-4-1)

- 11 P Schmeichel — G Neville, D May, G Kewell, D Beckham, N Butt, P Johnson, R Giggs (or O G Solsjaer) — Cantona — A Cole

BORUSSIA DORTMUND (probable, 3-5-2)

- 2 S Kitz — R Schneider, M Kreis, W Lambert, M Zorc, J Harren — S Chuparis, K Riedle

FA CUP SEMI-FINAL

The match will be shown live on TV starting at 7.30pm. Highlights of Juventus v Ajax will be shown at 11.45pm

when they go out to confront them in the flesh, they can maybe be a little awestruck.

"But once they start playing — tackling them, competing with them and beating them — then they realise it is not so bad, it is not like being in a torture chamber, it is not that painful, and then they start to enjoy it."

"We cannot play enough football at this level and long may it continue. I appreciate all the experience of Borussia Dortmund, but there comes a time when you have to turn away from that and this is maybe the time for our young players to turn the corner in this game. I am hopeful and optimistic about our chances."

That optimism is likely to have been boosted by claims

As he mulled over the pitfalls inherent in trying to wipe out the 1-0 advantage that Rene Tritschko's goal in Dortmund has given United's opponents, his mind wandered briefly to the vulnerability of young men such as Gary Neville, David Beckham, Nicky Butt and Ryan Giggs.

"For them," Ferguson said.

"It can be a bit like when you were a little boy and you used to read the comics, and even though you did not believe them, you still read them. There is this great thing about reading about the great players from abroad, from Milan, Ajax and Dortmund, and

With David returning to the centre of defence alongside Gary Pallister, it is likely that Ferguson will push Ronny Johnsen into the centre of midfield to partner Butt, with Beckham on the right and Giggs, if he is fit, on the left. Eric Cantona will be partnered either by Andy Cole or Ole Gunnar Solsjaer in attack.

"I have got selection dilemmas everywhere," Ferguson said. "Our form in the last two games has been excellent, but the players involved understand that I have got some hard choices and that it is not easy for me. But morale is high after the Liverpool result and we could not be in better shape. There are no excuses. They should just go out and enjoy it and try to express themselves."

"I take all the points about Dortmund missing players in the last game and I can understand why they are optimistic and why there are people in England, too, who think the same way. They think they are through to the final, but anybody who adopts that attitude with us gets a right."

"This could be a night when a lot of our players really make their names. I do not know how much of Manchester United you have seen yet. I think there is more to come and tomorrow night will be a great test for them."

Times Two Crossword

By KEVIN McCARRA

PAUL GASCOIGNE may not have broken his club's heart, but he has loosened its mighty grip on diplomacy. Rangers have always taken pride in privacy, but Walter Smith, the manager, has at last been provoked out of dignified reticence, into making a public admission of his exasperation with the England midfield player.

His opinions will surprise nobody who is familiar with life at Ibrox, but their expression marks a new stage in a deteriorating relationship between the club and Gascoigne.

"His actions," Smith said in an interview, "have tarnished the club's and my own image a great deal and it's been a very unpleasant side for me to have to handle."

The manager also admitted that he has grown less and less sure that he made the right

decision in signing Gascoigne from Lazio, for £4.3 million, in 1995. The player himself was not minded to challenge Smith's observations, remarking yesterday that he could not see any reason for "all the fuss".

For once, Gascoigne, 29, may be betraying signs of maturity. Perhaps he recognises that a rebuke is wholly merited. This season, he has admitted beating his now estranged wife, Sheryll, and while his failings as an athlete are lesser Rangers distress.

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His influence had been greater than ever this season and he had scored 17 goals by January. Smith's appreciation of Gascoigne's significance will not have dropped, even if his patience with the player has diminished. An offer that would allow Rangers to recoup their £4.3 million investment could prove tempting, but the club cannot discard Gascoigne lightly.

In any case, he may see little appeal in the reported interest of clubs such as Derby County, who can hardly provide him with the access to the European Cup on offer at Ibrox.

The assumption that Gascoigne, whose contract ends next year, is to be discarded may yet prove glib. In crudely pragmatic terms, the player has been precious to Rangers in their quest, now effectively

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Gascoigne taxes Smith's patience

By KEVIN McCARRA

PAUL GASCOIGNE may not have broken his club's heart, but he has loosened its mighty grip on diplomacy. Rangers have always taken pride in privacy, but Walter Smith, the manager, has at last been provoked out of dignified reticence, into making a public admission of his exasperation with the England midfield player.

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Lawrence ready to brave comeback

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

FIVE years after suffering the most distressing and dramatic of injuries during a Test match in New Zealand, David Lawrence is poised to complete an astonishing comeback today by playing for Gloucestershire against the county champions, Leicestershire.

Lawrence's career was widely assumed to be over when he failed to recover from the multiple fractures of a kneecap, sustained at Wellington early in 1992. Even Lawrence had admitted defeat and set up his own business, running a wine bar in Bristol.

Just before Christmas last year, however, the muscular character known to all as

TOMORROW

Reports from all of the first-class matches as *The Times* provides unrivalled coverage of cricket this summer

"Syd" decided that he no longer wished to be known as a former fast bowler. "He certainly took us by surprise," Philip August, the cricket secretary, said. "We were all sceptical at first, but the longer it went on, the more we realised it wasn't a gimmick."

Lawrence has already suffered a setback. He went to Zimbabwe on Gloucestershire's pre-season tour and was unable to play because of a hamstring strain. But he is

an indomitable character and, in the past five days, has bowled well enough to convince the club he is ready.

"Of course, it is a gamble," August said, "but he is certainly fit. He is still getting the ball down mighty quick and will have batsmen hopping around."

Lawrence, now 33, played five Tests for England between 1988 and 1992 and was commonly acknowledged as the quickest Englishman on the county circuit. He was also big, brave and hugely popular. If he plays today, many of those present when his career was so violently interrupted will hold their breath for him.

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